

AUTOBIOGRAPHY

SIR JOHN STOKES

KCB RE



1825 - 1902

AUTOBIOGRAPHY



SIR JOHN STOKES K.C.B. R.E.

CONTENTS PAGE

Frontispiece		i
Introduction		v
Family Trees		vii
Resume of Career of Sir John Stokes		ix
 Preface		 1
 Chapter 1	My Early Days	 3
Chapter 2	Embark for Foreign Service	9
	My First Kaffir War	
Chapter 3	My Second Kaffir War	28
Chapter 4	Life in England	41
Chapter 5	The Crimea	50
Chapter 6	The Danube Commission	57
Chapter 7	Work of the Commission	63
Chapter 8	The Danube (continued)	80
Chapter 9	The Danube (continued)	90
Chapter 10	The Danube (continued)	101
Chapter 11	The Suez Canal	110
Chapter 12	Chatham	126
Chapter 13	The Port of Alexandria	143
Chapter 14	Military Duties: Channel Tunnel	149
Chapter 15	The Lady Strangford Hospital	171
	The Roburite Explosives Company	
	Family Matters	
 Appendices		
Sir John Stokes K.C.B. R.E. deceased 17/11/1902		199
Military Terms and Abbreviations		201

Introduction

This Autobiography was written 100 years ago, and has not until now been disclosed to the present generation. It is indeed a very personal document and was originally intended "for Private Circulation only".

Sir John Stokes was a remarkable man, and this can be gauged from reading his manuscript. We quote an extract from the Minutes of the Institute of Civil Engineers Proceedings for 1902-1903, which describes the prominent features of the character of Sir John Stokes in the following terms - *"an unflinching loyalty to his friends, great kindness of heart, exceptional capacity for work, and inflexible uprightness. He was possessed of consummate tact, a quality which enabled him so often to obtain what he considered to be for the good of his country in his frequent intercourse with distinguished diplomatists and with his colleagues at home and abroad."* It was most truly said of him in a long eulogy by Prince d'Arenburg, President of the Suez Canal Company on the 2nd December 1902, *"que resistance de celui qui vient de nous quitter est certainement une des plus honorables et des mieux remplies qui se puissent trouver"*, translated

The life of the one who has just left us is certainly the most honourable and best fulfilled that one could find.

It is interesting to read extracts from the London newspaper report of his death and funeral, which are quoted separately, which includes the names of some of the important people with whom he was associated - Cabinet Ministers, Members of the House of Lords, Foreign Office, Board of Trade, Treasury etc., all indicating the esteem in which he was held by Her Majesty's Government. All of this clearly tells us that Sir John Stokes was really somebody out of the ordinary.

He had travelled widely, especially in Europe and Egypt, and as many of his journeys were in connection with duties under the Foreign Office, his visits to the various countries were made in circumstances which led to his introduction to the Ministers and important officials of various Governments. His travels, therefore, were full of interest, and he was able to see the Capitals and other important towns under very pleasant conditions. However, his travelling was all done laboriously by boat, train, and horse drawn vehicles, while his earlier journeys in Southern Africa were on foot or horseback, when he experienced exciting incidents.

As he himself explains, the manuscript was typed by him on a somewhat faulty type writing machine. Those obvious errors have been corrected but the sense has not been affected in any way.

Apart from these slight changes and the inclusion of maps and photographs, nothing else has been interfered with.

Perhaps I should shoulder the blame for any criticism.

K. M. Stokes 1994

SIR JOHN STOKES' PARENTS, HIS BROTHERS AND HIS SISTERS

John Stokes

John
1747-1817
m. Ann
1735-1828

Mary
m.
Thomas Giles

*Rev. John
27.2.1773-23.12.1859
m. 8.1.1822
Elizabeth Arabella Franks
11.8.1792-1.1.1868

William
1791-1862
To South Australia 1837

First Cousin of Rev. John Stokes

** Rev Edward
17.11.1822-19.3.1863
m. 8.2.1859
Helen Gaisford
b.? - Nov 1866

JOHN
11.6.1825-17.11.1902
m. 6.2.1849
in Grahamstown
S.Africa
Henrietta Georgina de
Villiers Maynard
1829-17.6.1893

Elizabeth Jane
14.2.1827-1834
(d. Scarlet Fever)

Isabella Sophia
6.8.1830-1834
(d. Scarlet Fever)

Francis William
16.9.1832-4.8.1889
m. Emily Rebecca
Giles

Isabella Elizabeth
17.3.1841 - Nov. 1866
m. 13.4.1863
Rev. John St John
Blunt

Margaret
b. 1861

Arr. S.Australia
1850
No issue.
1835-1929.
(Emily Known as
"Effie" in Kangaroo
Is. days, and "Little
Old Auntie" in the
1920's at Mount
Lofty)

1 daughter (died in
childhood)
1 son
(Isabella known as
"Pussie")

* Private Chaplain to John, the 4th Earl of Darnley, and tutor to his two sons - Edward, Lord Clifton, and Hon. John Duncan Bligh.
Vicar of Church of St. Mary Magdalene, Cobham, Kent. 1814-1859.

** Don at Christ Church, Oxford. Vicar of Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Staines, Middlesex. Chaplain to Whitehall, a great honour.

THE FAMILY OF SIR JOHN AND LADY HENRIETTA GEORGINA deVILLIERS STOKES

Georgina Elizabeth 14.11.1849- 24.4.1917	Charles Edward 20.8.1851- 12.7.1911	Arthur 9.4.1853- 24.3.1912	Rev Francis Herbert 29.12.1854- 21.2.1929	Edith 29.1.1857- 26.3.1933	Alice 15.8.1858- 16.8.1859	Alfred 14.10.1860- ?	Constance 10.5.1862- 1.6.1919
m. 1.3.1881 Arthur B. Hamilton	To South Australia m. 12.6.1877 Caroline Ada Giles 1850-1897	To Ceylon 1874 as a Coffee Planter Colonel D.S.O. R.A.	To S.Australia 1878 Priest 1890- 1929 m. 3.9.1879 Florence Giles 13.1.1852- 30.1.1930	m. Herbert M. Buchanan		To India 1892. Brigadier Royal Horse Artillery m. 11.8.1891 Margaret Laing	m. 29.12.1887 M.H. Bigg- Wither Edith ? - 1978
2 daughters	5 sons 1 daughter 2 daughters died in childhood		5 sons 1 daughter				

Resume of the career of Sir John Stokes

1825 Born Cobham, Kent

1843 Second Lieutenant, Royal Engineers

1846-47 Seventh Zulu War, South Africa

1848 Married Henrietta de Villiers Maynard in South Africa

1850-51 Eighth Zulu War

1851 Birth of Charles Edward Stokes; Recalled to England.

1855 Captain, Royal Engineers; went to Crimea.

1856 Commission for the Danube under the Treaty of Paris.

1860 Major, Royal Engineers.

1861 Vice Consul in the Danube Delta.

1867 Lieutenant Colonel, RE. Companion of the Bath.

1872-73 Officer in Command, Royal Engineers, South Wales.

1873 Promoted full Colonel

1875 British Commissioner in Egypt.

1876 British Representative on Board of Suez Canal Company.

1877 Knighted - Knight Commander of the Order of Bath.

1885 Major General, Royal Engineers.

1887 Lieutenant General, Royal Engineers.
Vice Chairman, Suez Canal Board.

1902 Died in Ewell, Surrey.

PREFACE

It has long been my intention to write for my children and their children an account of my life, in order that they may know something of the interesting work on which I have had the good fortune to be engaged, of the friends who have made so much of the happiness of my life, and of the places where it has been spent.

Being now in my 70th year it does not seem wise to defer much longer the execution of my project, - as failing memory of little things warns me that I should not delay putting on record many details that now live in my mind, but may ere long be forgotten.

Lt. Gen. Sir John Stokes
1894

Note: The numerous errors, in the following pages, of the letter "o" appearing where an "r" is required, are owing to a fault in the type-writing machine.



The Vicarage, Cobham, Kent

The original vicarage was situated close to the Church of St. Mary Magdalene. The vicarage pictured is more in the centre of the town. Sir John's father had the present vicarage built as the house then existing was too close to a noisy windmill for peace and quiet.

CHAPTER I

My Early Days

My Father, the Reverend John Stokes was born on the 27th of February 1773. He studied at Christ Church, Oxford, where his mathematical talents and lovable qualities made him a favourite with Dean Cyril Jackson.

Soon after taking his degree he became private Chaplain to John, 4th Earl of Darnley, and tutor to his two sons Edward, Lord Clifton, and the Honourable John Duncan Bligh, and from thence-forward till he died in 1859, he lived at Cobham in Kent; at first at Cobham Hall, and later in a house in the village. After having officiated as curate from early in 1809, he became, about 1814, Vicar of Cobham, which living was in the gift of Lord Darnley. On the 8th of January 1822 he married Elizabeth Arabella Franks, a lady of great personal attraction, and accomplished in music and painting.

My Mother had been left an orphan at a very early age, and was brought up in the family of Mr Hawkins, the master of the Rochester Free School, under the care of his three maiden sisters. She was born on the 11th of August 1792, and was thus in her 30th year when she married my Father, who was then nearly 49.

The marriage was a most happy one: no two people could have been more blessed in their own home, and in the universal love and respect in which they were held by all who knew them.

Their children were born as follows:

Edward on 17th, Novr. 1822:

John 17th. June. 1825:

Elizabeth Jane 14th. April. 1827:

Isabella Sophia 6th. August. 1830:

Francis William 16th Sept. 1832:

Isabella Elizabeth 17th March. 1841:

In 1825 my Father was made Rector of Milton-next-Gravesend, a living which he held together with Cobham, but he never lived there.

In July 1832 I went to my first school, Mrs Giles' in Sloane Street. Mr Giles was my Father's first cousin. The Mrs Giles under whose care I was placed died, and he married again, taking his second wife and all his family to the new Colony, South Australia in the year 1836. I got very ill with brain fever and was only saved by two applications of leeches on my forehead.: my Father took me home in October where I remained until

July 1833 when I went to school at Ramsgate with the Revd. C. Lenny, who had been my Father's Curate at Milton and who on his marriage had set up a school.

In 1834 the first cloud on the married life of my parents was caused by the death of my two sisters from scarlet fever, which later attacked Edward, my Mother and myself.

During December 1837 I left Dr. Lenny's, and in the summer of 1838 went to the Rochester Proprietary School, of which the Revd. R. Whiston was then the Head Master.

During the six months that I was at home several weeks were spent at Cobham Hall, where I got to know well my Godfather, the Hon'ble, afterwards Sir John Bligh, KCB, always a most kind friend to me. My bent as a boy was to be a sailor. Whilst at Whiston's school however I used often to spend Sundays with Capt. Harry Sandham R.E. and Mrs Sandham, at Brompton Barracks. He was adjutant at that time of the Royal Sappers and Miners, and he encouraged me to choose the Army as a profession, and to go to the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich and strive to get a commission in the Royal Engineers, for which my turn for Mathematics gave me a chance of success. He also recommended my Father to take the necessary steps to get a nomination from the Master General of the Ordnance for me to go up for examination. Lady Darnley's father, Sir Henry Parnell afterwards Lord Congleton, got me the nomination. He was then Pay-master General of the Forces in Lord Melbourne's Ministry. At that time the Ordnance Corps as they were called - the Royal Artillery and Royal Engineers, were not a part of the Army under the Commander-in-Chief at the Horse Guards but were under the Master General of the Ordnance - though they were attached to the Army wherever there were Troops in Garrison, or in the field. The Officers served on Courts-Martial and took all other Military duties, according to date of commission - and could command the Troops by virtue of their seniority. My Father entered warmly into the recommendations of his much valued friend Capt. Sandham, and acting on further suggestions, moved me to a school at Woolwich kept by Mr Robert Barry, who was one of the most successful of the Masters, who prepared boys for the R.M.A. We used to work twelve hours a day, had very rough meals, plenty, but not much time for them, and a walk in the afternoon was our only exercise. I first met there Edward Stanton and Henry Wray, of the R.E. and Charles Arbuthnot of the R.A. friends of my after-life who have had distinguished careers.

I was at Barry's from August 1840 to May 1841 - when I went up for examination. I learnt Euclid thoroughly and when I left, knew the first six books so perfectly, that I could prove any proposition word by word from the book with the letters of the figures changed. This was Barry's system, and the examiners could not puzzle us: we must have got full marks for Euclid. We also learnt Cubic Equations, which were not generally taught, and he put us up to several Algebraic catches which boys often failed to answer correctly.

In June my Father was anxious to know whether I had passed, so he took me up to London by coach and went to the Ordnance Office in

Pall Mall to enquire. The clerk whom we saw went to ask the question and I sat anxiously awaiting my fate. Presently he came back, and said "Your son has passed Sir, and I am glad to tell you he is at the head of the list". Our delight may be easily conceived. The dear old man's joy and pride in his boy was great, his face glowed and he took me straight to Barwise's to get my first watch, and a seal with our crest on it, which I still possess.

In the preceding March my sister, Isabella Elizabeth, always called "Pussie", had been born, and my brother Edward and I had stood God-fathers at her baptism.

I joined the R.M.Academy in August. My having passed well had a valuable result, for the thirteen head boys of the list were posted to the third class, and thus gained the six months that the rest of the batch had to spend in the fourth class: this really ensured to me the Engineers. At the first examination we passed over all the residue that we found in the third class and went into the second in Mathematics, most of us, however remaining in the third for Fortification. At the second examination six months later, the same thing occurred again, we went through the Cadets who had been left in the second, and in our third term were in the first class. This entailed upon us a good deal of bullying at first.: the old Cadets hated us for taking their places and went so far as to destroy our books, and subject us to other ill-usage: I came in for a good deal of this, but I was determined not to yield to it. I wanted the R.E. and took the best way to get into the noble old Corps. I worked steadily day by day and thus had no need to cram for the examination. The Cadets who bullied me idled all the term, and worked at night just before the examination to get up the subjects; but my plan was the best, for what is learnt steadily, day by day, is retained, but what is crammed into the head at the last moment is not available when wanted. In my third term I was head of a room, tho' not yet an old Cadet: and in my fourth term I was Senior Under Officer of the Fourth DIVISION without ever having been a Corporal. At the end of the fourth term I was fourth in the class on all subjects combined, and felt pretty sure of getting into the Engineers. I got the prize for German. The last or fifth term, we formed the Practical Class in the Royal Arsenal, where we had separate Barracks, and learnt all practical military work, being exercised in firing heavy guns and going through the work-shops to learn how guns were made and ammunition prepared, and also learning to survey and throw up field-works. At the end of this term we went before a Military Board composed of the Inspector General of Fortifications and the Heads of all the Military Departments at Woolwich, presided over by the General Commanding the Garrison - at that time Lord Bloomfield. The Lieut-Governor of the Academy was General Sir George Whitmore R.E.. The Brigade-Major of Sappers and Miners at Woolwich was my old friend Major Sandham, who with his wife was most-kind to me all the time I was a cadet and invited me constantly to his house. When the Public Day came off they asked my father and

mother to be present when the several prizes were given after the viva-voce examination. The dear old couple had thus the pleasure of seeing me receive the sword for good conduct and my commission in the Royal Engineers. As my brother Edward had two months before taking a First Class in Classics at Oxford, where he had been a student of Christ Church, our dear parents' cup of happiness in their two eldest sons was full.

A happy Christmas did we pass together in the old home where Christmas, New Year's Day, and their wedding day (8th January) were always marked with much simple festivity. One of the regular customs was, to sit up to see the old year out - listen to the merry peal of the church bells - earlier in the evening perhaps to the village band - and drink health and good wishes in mulled Elder wine of my dear Mother's making. All our friends round the Edmeades at Nurstead, Cobham, Pennis, and Hazells - the Smiths at Camer and Cobham, the Darnley's at Cobham Hall, the Hulkes at The Hermitage, the Shepherds at Luddesdown, the Braithwaites at Cobham Meadow, the Brenchleys at Wombwell Hall, the Kings at Stone and Longfield, the Formbys at Frindsbury, the Bakers and Nicholsons at Rochester, the Johnstons at Milton and the Lakes at Cobham. as well as all the parishioners sympathized heartily with our dear father and mother in the success of their two sons. The winter was a very happy one to which I look back with a swelling heart when I think that I alone of that happy family in the old Vicarage am now alive and that so many of the friends I have named have gone to their last home

I must here say one word of the happiness of our home circle. My Father was still hale and hearty though over 70 - My Mother at 50 was the picture of what a clergyman's wife should be - active in all good works for the benefit of the large number of men and women in the parish - a bright example to all, a wise friend to those in trouble, and a skilful minister to those who were sick. In the home the tender hearted father and loving mother - patterns of conjugal bliss - made an atmosphere of love and good-will in which their children delighted to be - never so happy as when all together. Edward's merry wit and poetical fancy gilded every subject he touched - Francis kept us all alive by his mischief, the little Pussie was the object on whom we all centred our affection She was through her short life, a delight to all who knew her - a sunbeam in the house. The first to leave this cherished Home - I had to join my Corps at Chatham.

The School of Military Engineering, or the Royal Engineer Establishment as it was then called, was commanded by Colonel Sir Frederick Smith, as director. The adjutant was Capt. George Whitmore, son of the Lieut. Governor of the R.M.A. Capt John Williams taught us surveying. For Field Works and Pontooning we were under the Adjutant.

I found Chatham a very pleasant station, and went through the practical military course of drill, surveying, field works, pontooning

&c with great eagerness. It was so near Cobham that I was able to spend much of my spare time there, and could to my great delight join the Cobham cricketers in summer and frequently in winter shoot the preserves of Lord Darnley my contemporary, who had succeeded his Father in the year 1837 - Rochester gaieties too were very numerous then. There were many gentle-folk in the ancient city in my young days, who used to open their houses freely to the young officers of the Garrison, and it was not an uncommon thing to have four or five engagements in the week. We had some good boats on the river too, in which we spent many an exciting afternoon - coming to grief in our dinghies athwart the hawsers of the many hulks of men of war moored in the Medway waiting to be commissioned - or taking fair ladies on boating excursions up the river in the "Flying Sap" - a six oared boat. My great friend and companion in these pleasures of all kinds, was Charles Pasley, son of General Sir Charles Pasley who founded the School of Military Engineering at Chatham early in the century, and was Director of it for some thirty years. Charles Pasley and I had been together at school at Whistons and at the R.M.A. had got our commissions on the same day - and remained close friends till his death in 1890. One of our exploits was to illuminate the old Keep of Rochester Castle one evening for the delectation of a young lady whom we had rowed up the river in the afternoon. On this evening we got a quantity of composition used for blue lights, and by burning it on the floor of the Castle, produced a most beautiful effect.

At the end of 1844 I had finished my course of engineering and was ordered, in February 1845 to Woolwich to join the 9th Company of Royal Sappers and Miners, which was under orders for the Cape of Good Hope. This my friend San&am had managed for me. During my stay at Chatham I had become acquainted with Lieut. Fuller R.E. who had just come home from the Cape: he told me so much of the sport to be had there and the happy lot of a subaltern R.E. who would immediately on landing have forage allowed him for two horses, and a prospect of active service, that my imagination was fired with a keen desire to go there. Woolwich was then the Headquarters of the Sappers and Miners, who were officered by the Royal Engineers. The Corps there was virtually under the command of the Brigade Major, who, was at that time Major Sandham. He quite entered into my desire to go out to the Cape, and got me posted to the 9th Company, commanded by Capt. Richard Howorth. At length in June 1845 passage was found for us in the Barque "Gilbert Henderson" a vessel of some 517 tons, chartered for the voyage to Algoa Bay.

In May I went to Oxford where I met my Father and Mother, who had gone on a visit to Edward.

One evening we dined at Dean Gaisford's, which was the more interesting to me as I was introduced to his second daughter Helen, for whom I knew Edward had the tenderest affection.

My Father and Mother went to stay with the Sandhams to see the last of me, but I persuaded them not to accompany me on board; it was so much better to get over the parting and then enter at once upon the many duties to which I had to attend as the only subaltern of the Company.

At his age, my Father who was then 72, could hardly expect to see me again, and I had that weight too on my heart. However he not only lived to welcome me back again from the Cape in 1851, but from the Crimea in 1856 and from the Danube in 1858. Thank God!

CHAPTER 2

Embark for Foreign Service. My First Kaffir War

Our fellow passengers on the "Gilbert Henderson" were our doctor, O'Connor by name, Major and Mrs Sands C.M.R., a Capt. Grogan who was going out as a Barrack Master with his wife and children a young Commissariat officer, Tom Strickland, a Mr Hursthouse and his sister, and a Dutch farmer of the name of Cullum, a very mixed lot. The Captain's name was Tweedie.

We sailed on the 3rd June 1845. Our voyage began very badly. In the Downs our crew mutinied and refused to continue the voyage, the Captain had to land, go up to London, and engage another crew. We lay at anchor in the Downs for five days, and one night had a fire on board, which however, our Sappers promptly extinguished. At last we got under way, but ran ashore on Dungeness.

Happily the sea was calm, and as the tide rose we got off. Our voyage was a slow one and tedious enough. At first I was very seasick as we had rough weather in the Bay, but I recovered in time, and used to take great interest in everything connected with working the ship. I took observations of the sun every day. My duties as subaltern were lighter in one respect than they would have been, had we had a full complement of subs, as being the only one, I had not to keep watch. On the other hand I was always on duty, and had daily the disagreeable task of presiding at the issue of rum to every man and boy in the Company, about 90 all told. Each man brought his pannikin, and I had to see the ration measured from the barrel and poured into it. The smell of rum was most disagreeable to so bad a sailor. On the Equator, whilst in the Doldrums, a sudden squall carried away our fore-topmast, and we had to get up a spare one from the hold, and trim it down to right size, hoist it to its place and rig it; in all of which the Sappers were most useful. On the Line, the new hands on board so far out-numbered the sailors that we did not allow "old Neptune", when he came on board, to take any liberties with us, as he usually does with landmen.

Three weeks before reaching the Cape our fresh provisions ran out, and we were reduced to salt meat and biscuit. I enjoyed the voyage very much. We used to spank along under full sail in a very jolly manner, but when we had to go about we had a most dreadful smell all through the ship from the bilge water, which got stirred up as the vessel heeled over to go on the other tack.

Capt. Howorth who was a good fellow, twice my age and more, had served in Canada and Corfu, and was a good hand at telling stories and anecdotes of himself and others under or with whom he had served; he gave me the benefit of these as we tramped the deck for hours together. He was very fond of piquet and we used also to play

whist, or whatever was going on, with the other passengers. I had a good library of books with me, which enabled me to pass many hours pleasantly and profitably.

Tom Strickland of the Commissariat and myself, the two youngest on board were much thrown together, and we used often to have a tiff as we were both hot-tempered, and in those days the Commissariat were not much thought of, and a young R.E. did not care to be checked by one of them. Strickland however was a gentleman born, and came of one of the old families of Lancashire, and our differences were easily adjusted.

One day after passing the Cape, at which we could not touch under our charter, we saw in the distance the smoke of a steamer which was thought to be the "Phoenix", a small craft plying between Cape-Town and Algoa Bay. As Strickland wanted to get to Capetown, the Captain signalled the steamer to ask her to bear down and take an officer on board - we were becalmed at the time. The steamer changed her course and came within hailing distance but, to the dismay of our captain, she proved to be H.M.S. "Thunder-bolt", commanded by Captain Broke, son of the gallant sailor who commanded the "Shannon" when she captured the "Chesapeake". Strickland was bundled into a boat with the second mate to request a passage. As she shoved off, Mrs Grogan, the aggressive wife of Capt Grogan who was going out as barrack master, cried to them, "Give Captain Howarth's compliments to Captain Broke and say that there are ladies on board, and no fresh provisions for several days". Captain Broke showed himself a gentleman and sent a sheep on board, but old Howarth was very savage at his name having been thus used without his knowledge.

On our way up the coast we witnessed splendid effects of refraction in the clear atmosphere. Vessels we passed being reflected in the clear atmosphere in three lines in the sky; and at night we saw a lunar rainbow, a very rare and beautiful sight.

At length, on the 19th August, after a voyage of 77 days from Woolwich, we arrived in Algoa Bay. The town of Port-Elizabeth then not much more than a straggling village, lay before us. We landed on the 26th, in surf boats, - heavy barges, with bow and stern alike, shaped to breast the big rollers which constantly sweep into the Bay from the Southern Ocean. They are worked by hauling on a cable which passes over wheels fixed in the bow and stern. A system of cables is fixed in the Bay, and connected by a warp to a ship on her arrival. On nearing the beach we found ourselves separated from it by some 20 or 30 feet of surf, through which naked Fingoes rushed to the boat's side to carry us ashore much to the disgust of the ladies, who did not like being held in the arms of such dirty looking people.

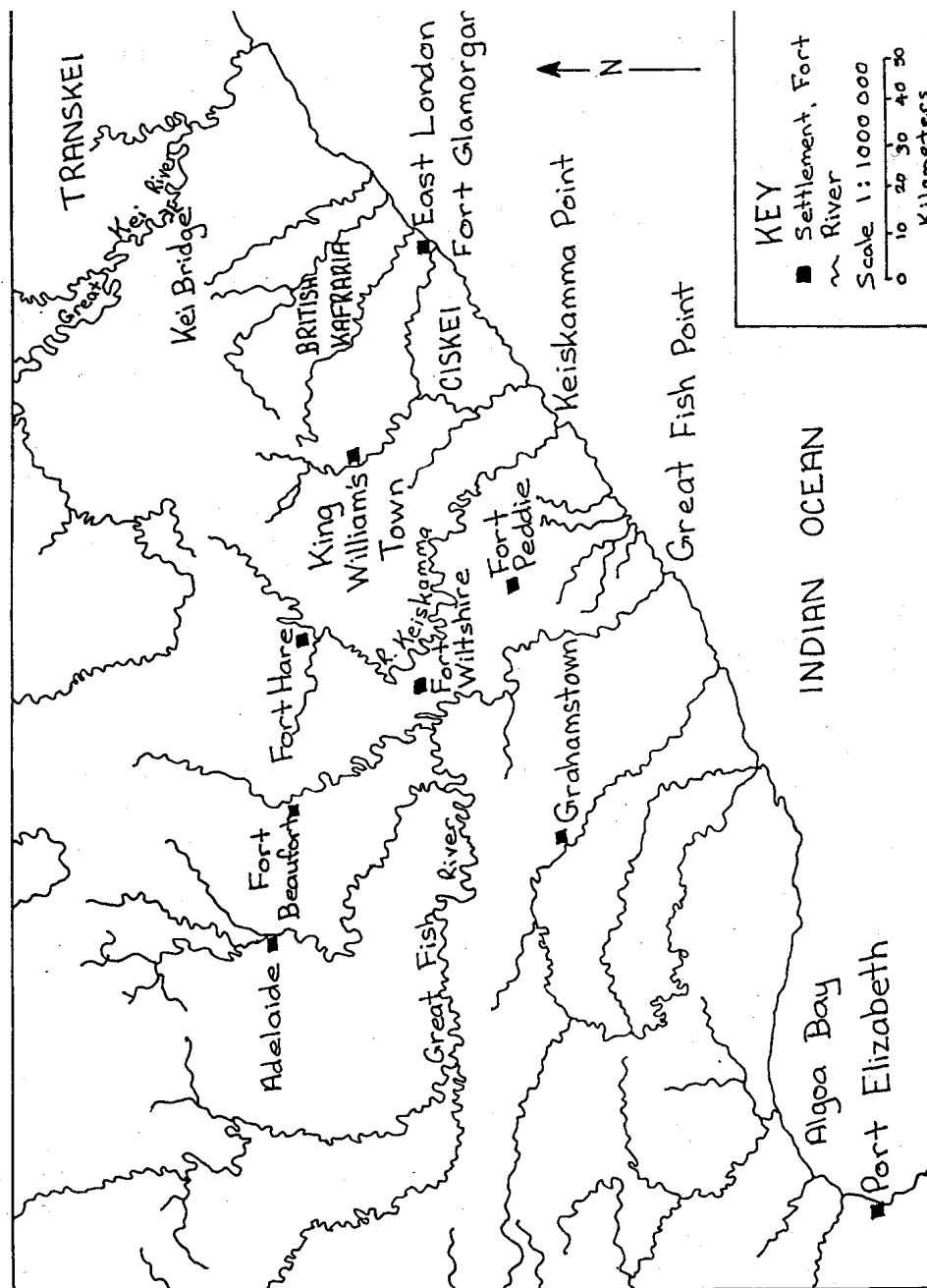
Having drawn tents and other stores for camp life, the 9th Company began its march of about 100 miles to Graham's Town. We had to cross the Bushman and Sunday rivers, and had our first experience of Cape Waggon and oxen; and of the pleasures of marching on foot over a simple waggon track, which could not be called a road. However, with all its hardships, this was a most enjoyable march, the entire novelty of everything having a charm alike for officers and men. It gave us a good opportunity of judging the characters of our N.C. officers, who were certainly an excellent lot of men (far superior to those we get now) well seasoned under the different conditions of service then prevailing. There were a few drunkards among the men, but they were on the whole a valuable body of artificers of all kinds.

The latter part of our march was through fine scenery in a rugged defile called Howison's Poort. Eight days marching brought us to Graham's Town, where we were quartered in the Drostdy Barracks, with part of the 91st. Regiment. We were kindly welcomed by Capt John Walpole, who was Commanding Engineer. Colonel Hare who commanded the Frontier, was an officer of some note.. He was formerly in the 27th Regt. which he led at Quatre Bras, when they gained the distinction of wearing a plate at the back as well as front of their shakos, from having faced about to receive and drive back a French Regiment which attacked them in the rear; he was also Commandant of Paris after the battle of Waterloo.

Capt Walpole soon introduced me to the Maynards who lived very near. Mr Charles Maynard was one of the leading merchants of Graham's Town, and his wife was a most kind charming woman universally beloved. Their two eldest daughters - Fanny and Eta - were then about seventeen and a half and sixteen - and were beautiful girls.

The first thing we had to do was to get horses. I was "stuck" by a fellow of the 91st. with a bay horse, "Sultan", whom I soon found to be a fidgety, disagreeable brute to ride, as he had no walking paces, and jogged me to death when riding in company. My second horse "Rainbow", I bought from Capt. Christie of the 91st., and he was one of the best I ever had. Riding parties with the Maynards soon became the order of the day, and were very much enjoyed. Capt. Howorth, and the bulk of the 9th. Company, soon went on to Fort Beaufort, leaving me with some thirty men at Graham's Town. At that place I became acquainted with Lieut. W.F.D. Jervois R.E. a subaltern nearly five years my senior. He proposed that we should ride up together to Fort Beaufort to see Howorth, and make the acquaintance of the 7th. Dragoon Guards, who were stationed there. This I was delighted to do, and thus get my first experience of a long ride through the country. Having got leave we started off, each leading a second horse with our saddle-bags. This expedition was a very trying one to me owing to "Sultan" being such a brute: if I rode him he

jogged me to death, if I led him he nearly dragged my arms off, as he walked or trotted even worse when led than when ridden. Jervois with his long accustomed nags, went along merrily.



Map shows places mentioned by Sir John Stokes in Southern Africa, site of the Kaffir Wars.

The 46 miles ride therefore was to me a very fatiguing one. The road lay through the Ecka pass and across the Koonap River. At the drift over the latter was a comfortable inn kept by one Tomlinson and his wife, and we had a pleasant rest there. We did not get into Fort Beaufort till after dark, but had a warm welcome from Howorth. Fort

Beaufort is on the Tyumi river, and lies at the bottom of a gorge of the Amatolas; it is one of the hottest stations of the Cape.

I soon returned to Graham's Town, and a few days later was ordered to take my detachment of Sappers up to Fort Beaufort, which we reached on the 15th of October. Shortly afterwards (Jany. '46) I was ordered to take three Sappers and pitch my tent at a place called Block Drift, about 15 miles from Port Beaufort, to make a survey of the position. At this place there was a Mission Station and School, and a Mr Stretch lived there as a Resident Magistrate to preserve order.

The Station was situated in a bit of country called the "Ceded Territory", lying between the Fish and Keiskamma rivers. It had once formed part of the Colony, and had been evacuated with an understanding that it should be considered neutral ground between the Colony and Kaffirland, to prevent Kaffir depredations on Colonial farmers. I at once set to work to make my survey of the position; but very shortly Mr Stretch received a menacing message from Sandilli, the paramount Chief of the Gaikatribe of Kaffirs, complaining of the presence of soldiers as a breach of the neutralized character of the "Ceded Territory", and demanding the immediate withdrawal of my party.

Compliance with this demand was of course out of the question. Mr Stretch reported the circumstance. Sandilli next threatened to compel me to withdraw. Half a company of the 91st, stationed at Port Victoria, some 16 miles away, was sent up for my protection, and, as Sandilli's threats became more and more violent, the force round my tent grew to a whole company, then to two companies, and finally to a squadron of Cavalry, 7th Dragoon Guards, one gun Royal Artillery, some of the Cape Corps, and four companies of Infantry, with Col. Hare, the Lieut. Governor, at their head, Sandilli on his part came down with some 5000 Kaffirs, the greater part of whom were on the hill tops surrounding our Camp, but several hundreds were drawn up in a body facing our troops, with Sandilli and his chief men in their centre. Col. Hare, accompanied by Mr Stretch, Lieut. Reilly C.M.B. and myself, rode into the centre of this line to confront Sandilli - an imprudent act, considering that a few years before Sir Andrew Stockenstrom, a former Lieut. Governor, had been murdered by the Kaffirs when putting similar trust in them.

The conversation between Col. Hare and Sandilli was a series of recriminations, the Chief complaining of the infraction of the agreement as to the "Ceded" "Territory", the Governor alleging the numerous misdeeds of the Kaffirs in entering the Colony and driving off the farmers' flocks and herds. It ended in a promise of good behaviour for the future on the part of Sandilli, and the undertaking for the withdrawal of my party: for, as I had gone on with my work

during the several days that Sandilli was complaining and the troops assembling, I had finished my survey, and there was no longer any need for me to remain. We learnt later that we narrowly escaped Stockenström's fate. It had been arranged that at a given signal, - the firing of a musket - Col. Hare and his party were to be assailed, and a sudden rush made on the troops, who would be taken unawares. Fortunately for us the gun of the Kaffir who was to give the signal, missed fire three times, which they held to be a bad omen, and gave up their intended treachery.

I was lucky in having this adventure so early in my Cape service for I was fortunate enough to win the good opinion of Capt. Scott, 91st., who commanded the supporting force at first sent up, and whom I was able to assist in many ways in making his position defensible, and by taking military duties with his men, as well as doing my own work. He therefore made a good report of me to Col. Somerset who commanded the Frontier Force, and very shortly afterwards I was ordered to Victoria to make the post defensible. It was a large straggling camp and taxed my ingenuity to make it safe with the very limited sources at my command.

Whilst I was there a sad occurrence took place; a gunner shot his commanding officer, Capt. Sheppard, and subsequently I had to go to Graham's Town to give evidence at his trial, as to the latitude of the place, to fix which I took observations. I had to prove that it was South of the 25th. degree of South Latitude, because in those days our Courts had jurisdiction South of that parallel only.

After I had been some weeks at Victoria, the situation with the Kaffirs had become intolerable: their robberies of cattle had not ceased, and Sandilli would do nothing to restrain them. Two detachments of troops were therefore ordered to enter Kaffirland. The first, under Col. Somerset, who indeed commanded the whole force, advanced from Victoria, and was composed of the Cape Mounted Rifles, Capt. St John Brown's Battery, and the 91st. Regiment under Col. Campbell. The other force from Fort Beaufort, consisted of the 7th. Dragoon Guards (Col. Richardson) with some companies of the 91st. Regt.

Col. Somerset made me the Deputy Assistant Quarter Master General of the force - rather an onerous post for a young man, a 2nd. Lieut. not yet 21 years of age - but there were no officers at that time qualified by their education for Staff duty, except those of the Artillery and Engineers. I was the only Staff Officer with the force. Of the particular duties of the post I had but a theoretical knowledge, but was full of zeal and a ardour and delighted to be so soon sent on active service. We marched on the 11th. of April 1846, and I soon found how difficult it was to keep the troops and their baggage' waggons in touch. We had a long train of 60 Ox-waggons

each drawn by 14 to 16 bullocks yoked two and two, and thus each waggon covered an enormous length of road - say from 30 to 40 yards - and the train was about a mile and a half long. Roads there were none, merely rough waggon tracks. Every dip into a valley caused a lengthening out of the line, and the fording of rivers delayed the force for hours. The selection of ground for encamping was generally made by the Colonel, but the location on it of the troops and the waggons was my duty. As we approached the enemy's country it was necessary to get the waggons into a square and to put the oxen and horses inside, to guard against attack during the night, or, what was more likely, the "cutting out" of the cattle by individual Kaffirs creeping in under cover of the darkness. On the 13th of April we joined forces with Col. Richardson, and on the 15th we reached a Mission Station on the skirts of the Amatolas called Burn's Hill. Here too we were joined by an irregular force of Burghers-Dutch and English farmers - under Col. Sutton C.M.R., who reported large herds of Kaffir cattle feeding on the reverse slopes of a big hill in front of us. We had crossed the Keiskamma, the most important river in these parts, and were now close to Sandilli's kraal. I got the camp of the Victoria force into shape, but it was impossible to get the Beaufort force properly laagered. Their waggons, some 60 in number, came straggling in all the night, and just took up position among the scattered Mimosa bushes, as they saw fit. This was the first campaign against the Kaffirs in which the 7th Dragoon Guards had taken part, and neither of fixers nor men had any idea of its conditions: moreover their equipment and arms were utterly unsuited to such warfare. They had been sent to the Cape to overawe the Dutch Boers, who were giving trouble, and had been armed for this purpose with a long rifle. This weapon was loaded - as all fire-arms then were - from the muzzle, with a belted bullet which, placed on a greased rag, had to be driven home, with the ramrod. The time required for such loading was fatal to skirmishing in the bush, and the ramming home of the ball unsteadied the soldier's hand and made his shooting far more erratic than if he had had a smooth bore musket. The men were heavy Cavalry soldiers, most of them six feet high, with brass helmets, and ponderous swords; they were consequently of necessity mounted on strong, heavy horses. One can conceive no force more unfitted for fighting in the bush, where they could not have charged, even had there been a body of the enemy massed together. They were splendid targets in their red coats and glittering helmets and accoutrements. Happily the Kaffirs in those days had few firearms and did not know how to make them shoot straight. For the matter of that our own soldiers with the old "Brown Bess", as the smooth bore musket was called, were not much better. The only troops properly armed and equipped for Kaffir warfare were the Cape Mounted Rifles, or Cape Corps, as they were more commonly called; a body of active little Hottentots with English officers.. They were mounted on wiry cobs and armed with a double-barrelled smooth bore carbine, easily loaded, which left a barrel

always in reserve, after the first shot - an immense advantage in bush fighting. This digression as to our forces and its equipment is necessary to make what follows more easy to understand.

Col. Sutton proposed to Col. Somerset that he should set off next day with the bulk of his force to capture the cattle which he and his Burghers had descried on the other side of the "7 Kloof Hill" overlooking our camp. I besought the Colonel not to move till his camp was put into some state of defence. There was a splendid position just above us a bare hill on which there had once been a fort, Cox by name, and where we subsequently built another Fort Cox; it was surrounded by a bend of the Keiskamma rivers and could be held safely by a small force. But how could the arguments of a young inexperienced lad like myself, however sound they might be in principle, prevail against the impetuous proposal of a galloping Cape Corps man, addressed to the most active cattle hunter in the Colony - "Old Jack" as Somerset was called - Henry being his name? Major Gibson, 7th. D.G. was left in command of the camp, with orders to get the waggons of his Regiment and those of the Victoria force, formed up in a square. He had a troop of 7th. D.G.'s, two companies of the 91st., two guns, and a detachment of the Cape Corps. Our position was this, over against the Fort Cox Hill, on the other side of the Keiskamma, was a big hill, or almost mountain, called the Seven Kloof Hill from the number of deep Kloofs or valleys which branched off it into the Keiskamma. Separating this hill from the main Amatolas, was the Wolf river, which ran into the Keiskamma at the head of the bend encircling Fort Cox Hill. Col. Campbell and the 91st. were sent up the Wolf Valley, Col. Sutton and his Burghers were sent over the Seven Kloof Hill, and Col. Somerset with the 7th. D.G.'s the Cape Corps, and guns and rockets under Capt. Brown, took the road round the foot of the hill, with a view to getting into the open country on the other side, and effecting a junction with Col. Campbell as he emerged from the head of the Wolf Valley, at the same time securing the cattle which Sutton's force was expected to capture by their rapid march over the hill. This all came off as arranged, and at sunset we found the whole force in the open country with 1500 cattle taken from the Kaffirs. Going back to camp with such a mass of cattle was out of the question, moreover men and horses were tired. The 91st. had had a most difficult march, fighting all the way up the bed of a watercourse, though happily without many casualties. Under these circumstances, and feeling it incumbent on him to return to the Colony to put his captured cattle in safety, Col. Somerset sent me off at sunset with an escort of twelve Cape Corps men under an old Kaffir Sergeant with orders to Major Gibson to bring all the waggons into the open country next day to join the main body. I was not very well mounted, having under me only a slow bat horse, my charger being done up with the day's work. Capt. Brown, seeing the perilous ride, on which I was setting out, insisted on my taking a capital pony he had, which probably saved my life.

Riding round the base of the Seven Kloof Hill we saw the Kaffirs running down to cut us off, and I pulled my escort together for a fight. As we entered a wooded dip the leading file fired. I at once reprimanded the Sergeant for firing without my orders "Oh! Sir, he said, that is frontier standing order - always fire as you ride into a dip, if Kaffir is there he run out, and there" (pointing) "you see, Sir. he's running away. If we had not fired he would have shot one of us perhaps." I at once saw the truth of his remark and the wisdom of the standing order, so I interfered no more with such independent file firing.

Matters were growing serious; Kaffirs were pouring down to the track by which we had marched in the morning; in every dip of the road we might find an ambush, and our arrival in camp seemed an impossibility. My trusty Sergeant came up to me and pointed this out, saying that he knew a ford over the Keiskamma near at hand, and that if we could get over it, we should find the ground on the other side more open and free from Kaffirs.

We therefore rode for our lives to get first to the ford. The Kaffirs divined our object and pursued us hard, shouting after us. Happily we were 200 yards ahead of them owing to our sudden detour, and got over safely. They did not attempt to cross after us, of which I was glad, as one of the troop horses knocked up and had to be left behind. I was the last of the party to cross and had I been on my own slow beast, should probably have been cut off - thanks to Browne's forethought I was safe.

Our troubles however were not at an end. As we approached we heard heavy firing from Major Gibson's camp, and saw that we should probably find ourselves amidst his assailants and perhaps receive the fire of our friends in camp. As it happened we got in all right, and learnt that they had had a disastrous day. The Kaffirs had carried off 100 of the trek oxen, and thus rendered it more difficult to move the waggons. Capt. Bambrick of the 7th D.G.'s had been killed in the skirmish following the capture of the oxen, and the force generally was in a rather nervous state from feeling surrounded by an enemy whom they could not see, but who made themselves felt, with whom they had never before had any fighting, and whose tactics were strange to them.

Major Gibson's orders, as conveyed by me, were to march at day-break the next morning to join Col. Somerset. In the state of things existing on my arrival he considered this to be impossible, and that for the safety of the immense train of waggons - 120 - covering more than three miles of such a road as we had to advance by, a strong body of the Cape Corps should be sent to re-inforce him. He despatched a party accordingly before midnight, with a letter detailing all these matters to Col. Somerset and saying that he would not move till 10 A.M. in order to give time for the Cape Corps to

arrive. He made his dispositions as follows - The Victoria division of waggons was to march first, to be followed by the Beaufort waggons. One company of the 91st., half a troop of the 7th. D.G.'s, and one gun under Lieut. Gregory R.A. were sent to occupy a knoll commanding the ford over the Keiskamma, with orders to move on as a guard to the Victoria division of waggons as soon as they should be all across. He placed the other gun under my orders, and took up a position to cover the advance of the Beaufort waggons up to the ford. I believe that some order was given for a detachment to occupy the knoll as soon as the advanced guard moved on, but I have no certain knowledge on this point. No force from Col Somerset having arrived by 10am the order was given to advance.

At 6 A.M a party of 20 men under an officer of the Cape Corps had arrived with orders to burn Sandilli's kraal, which was less than a mile from our camp. This had been done, and the party had returned to Col. Somerset. This act had filled the Kaffirs with rage and as soon as we began our march, they poured down to attack the column. My gun shelled the valleys on the river side of the line of march, but presently we saw a confused mass of drivers rushing to the rear. I went forward and found that the leading waggon of the Beaufort division had capsized across the road so that others could not pass it on account of the thick bush; Kaffirs were cutting the oxen out of the following waggons, and the drivers had run away. I returned to the Major and asked him to give me a party of men to go forward and remove the capsized waggon, attack the Kaffirs, and make the drivers do their duty. A small party was hastily given me, but by the time I reached the front again, only three or four men were with me - a number quite inadequate for the purpose - and so many oxen had now been driven off into the bush that it was hopeless to try and save the waggons. How I twice ran the gauntlet of these savages over more than a mile of road, there and back without a scratch, I have never been able to understand.

Major Gibson had kept the four waggons of spare ammunition with the main body in his own hands. We presently saw flames rising from the Beaufort waggons, and just then the head of a column of Infantry appeared beyond the river. Somerset had sent them instead of the Cape Corps as requested and thus our re-inforcement came too late. It was impossible for us now to take the waggons full of ammunition along the road to the ford, encumbered with blazing waggons, so we made a long detour over some rising ground, in order to avoid the obstacle. Our only other loss that day was a tumbrill which the Artillery had to abandon.

Of course our arrival in camp was not an agreeable one after losing half our train. Poor Gibson was blamed, but the fault lay with Col. Somerset for not realizing the difficulty in which he had left him, and for not sending the Cape Corps, who, if they had arrived before

10 A.M. as they could have done, would have averted the disaster.

The 7th. D.G.'s had taken a valuable kit into the field - much of their Mess plate, and stores of wine and beer and potted meats &c all of which were lost, as well as their Regimental and Company books. My baggage that morning, had unfortunately, got among their waggons, so that I lost all my field kit, except what I had in my pack saddle - a loss I could never replace during the war.

I was placed in a very difficult position with Col. Somerset. He railed at Gibson, whereas, honestly I could not but say that he had done all that man could do under such circumstances. He had been left in the heart of the enemy's country with an insufficient force, with an immense train - of itself a tempting object to the enemy - with his camp unformed and in confusion his oxen to the number of over 1600 to be taken care of in a bushy country, and with a mere handful of Cape Corps who alone were accustomed to Kaffir tactics. The rest of his force had never seen Kaffir warfare.

As we rode back the next day towards the Colony, I could see that I was no longer in favour with my Chief. We arrived that evening at Block Drift, where I had made my survey a few months before. I had formed the camp and during the next few days, did my best to keep it in a sanitary condition, but the habits of the Hottentots, the licence of the Contractors, who slaughtered their cattle all over the place, &c, obliged me to urge the Colonel to give stringent orders for the better regulation of these matters. He seemed indifferent to them, but I felt strongly that the health of the whole force depended on this, and returned to the charge. He there-upon began to curse and swear as he was accustomed to do at his Cape Corps officers; but I could not brook such conduct and resigned my appointment - the duties of which I could not properly fulfil, if not supported by my Chief.

Capt. Walpole, the C.R.E. who had come up from Graham's Town, approved of my doing so, but it was of course very disappointing to me to cut myself off from the chance of distinction in such a prominent position. Really and truly I was too young for it, and my rank of 2nd. Lieut. was insufficient to give me the necessary weight with officers of much higher grade to whom I had to be the channel through which they received their orders.

I was succeeded by Capt. Bisset of the C.M.R. who filled the post admirably. I ought to say, in justice to myself, that I did not fail in any of the duties confided to me or expected of me, but I could not share the Colonel's views of Major Gibson's handling of his force and thence-forward I ceased to please him.

I was immediately sent to Corps duty, with a detachment of Sappers,

at the drift over the Koonap river, where I was instructed to place Tomlinson's Inn in a state of defense, as a fortified post to cover the passage of the river and afford protection to the cattle and trains of waggons bringing up supplies.

As soon as Col. Somerset's force fell back on Block Drift the Kaffirs poured into the Colony and carried devastation far and wide, burning the farm houses, carrying off the cattle and sheep, and murdering or ill-treating the farmers and their wives and families. The troops were sent into the Colony again for their protection, and levies of Hottentots were raised to strengthen the force in the field.

The Governor, Genl. Sir Peregrine Maitland, an old Peninsular and Waterloo hero, hastened up from Cape Town to take command, with all the troops that could be spared for the front.

I fortified the Koonap post in about three weeks in the same manner as I had done Port Victoria, and was then ordered to join a column that was marching via Commatuy's Drift over the Fish river to relieve Fort Peddie. A further disaster had befallen the troops during the month of May. Two companies of the 91st, with some levies under Capt. Campbell of that Regiment, were escorting a train of forty-two waggons with supplies from Graham's Town for Fort Peddie, which stood on high ground between the Fish & Keiskamma rivers, when they were attacked after crossing the Fish river at Trompeter's Drift by a body of Kaffirs, who cut out the oxen, and burnt the waggons after gutting them of their contents.

Fort Peddie was thus reduced to straits for provisions, and Col. Somerset was ordered to force a passage through the Fish River bush with another train of waggons to relieve the Fort. The road by Commatuy's Drift was thought to be the most open and he accordingly took that route, though not the most direct.

My dangerous ride in the Amatolas when Brown's pony saved my life had made me see the necessity of getting an active steed, and in Graham's Town I bought an excellent hack for my purpose. As we mounted the hill from Commatuy's Drift, the Kaffirs again attacked us, no doubt hoping to destroy the very large convoy of waggons. My duties had been to improve the road wherever required, and in pushing up the hill from one bad part to another, under a smart fire, I felt my poor beast flinch, and when I got to the top found that he had been shot through the flank; he died next morning. I was thus left without a good horse, a great loss, for in the field there was no chance of buying another. We passed a very rough night - on the top of the hill - with no water and very little food, and early next morning pushed on to Peddie, Capt. Sir Harry Darrell with a troop of 7th Dragoon Guards, some of the Cape Corps and Burghers came out and joined the force, but as we were in the open the enemy did

not attack.

At Fort Peddie we found a small force of Cavalry and Infantry and for some days I was occupied under Capt. Walpole's orders in improving the defenses, of this place. On the 8th. June we accompanied a strong force that went to try and clear the Fish River bush, from Trompeter's Drift to Commatuy's Drift, of the Kaffirs infesting it, who made it difficult to keep up communication with Graham's Town. A body of Hottentot levies was sent down to Trompeter's Drift, and the regular troops took post at the edge of the bush on the level plain above. After an hour or two's skirmishing we on the top were annoyed by dropping shots from a water course below us and from the bush above, and presently a spent ball struck my dear old Chief on the thigh, and inflicted a wound, which did not incapacitate him at the time, but proved troublesome eventually. Gathering a few men, I made a rush across the intervening space, and reaching the edge of the water-course, found it occupied by Kaffirs, three of whom fell to my gun and to the carbine which I snatched from a Cape Corps man. Major Donovan, who had followed me up, found a path down the gully and killed two more of the Kaffirs, the rest bolting. One of the five men was Zito, a Chief of Pato's the tribe which we were attacking.

After this episode, the skirmish of the Gogha, there was not much more fighting at that point, and the Colonel drew off his men to get some refreshment. As we crossed the open country, we came upon a body of 500 Kaffirs making their way from the Keiskamma to the Fish bush. Such an opportunity of meeting our enemy in the open had not before presented itself, and without a moment's hesitation, the whole force was launched upon our light-footed foes, who, we feared, might escape before we could strike. Sir Harry Darrell with his troop of 7th. Dragoon Guards, was the first to reach them. He charged through the black mass and back again, but without inflicting much loss, the heavy swords of the Dragoons doing little damage. Darrell and his charger between them received five wounds from assegais. The next charge was by a party of mounted Dutch Boers, who with the Infantry made short work of the Kaffirs, about one half of whom were slain. Walpole was again wounded by a Kaffir whose life he was trying to save: the man threw his assegai which ripped up his throat, just missing the jugular vein.

My dear old Chief's wounds had an important influence on my whole life, for they prevented his again taking the field, and I was consequently left for some weeks the only officer of R.E. with the troops, being the junior R.E. officer in the Colony.

Shortly after this, General Sir Peregrine Maitland reached Fort Peddie, and took the direction of the operations into his hands. I received from him the following letter of commendation for my hand

to hand fighting on the Gogha on the 8th. June, and had the honour of taking him over the ground where the battle of the Gwanga was fought on the same day.

Camp. June 29th 1846

Sir,

I am desired by the Commander-in-Chief to forward to you a copy of letter from Colonel Somerset, K.H. Commanding 2nd Division from which His Excellency is pleased to learn that your conduct on the occasion was such as to be noticed by him. I have &c. (signed) A.J. Cloete.

Lieut. Colonel.

D.Q.M.G .

Lieut.Stokes R.E.

Sir,

Captain Walpole R.E. has brought to my notice the spirited conduct of Lieut. Stokes R.E. who accompanied Capt. Donovan C.M.R. when he engaged the enemy on the morning of the 8th inst. as mentioned in my dispatch, Lieut. Stokes having shot three of the enemy himself. I was not aware of this fact. I request therefore that you will do me the favour to bring Lieut. Stokes' conduct under the favourable notice of the Commander-in-Chief.

I have the honour to be

Sir,

Your obedient
Servant,

H. Somerset. Col.Commanding 2nd Division.

Lt. Col. Cloete. K.H. D.Q.M.G.

True copy. F. Eardley-Wilmot

Captain.

D.A.Q.M.G.

For a month I was constantly employed in various movements in which I accompanied the General, in the country surrounding Peddie, and on 8th July we started on a more distant expedition to carry the war into Kaffirland proper. We thus crossed the Keiskamma and Buffalo Rivers, after reconnoitring the mouth of the latter. We passed the site of an old Mission station at an abandoned town called King William's Town, and encamped on the Goneiga River. From this point Col. Somerset was sent forward to the Kei in order to punish the Kaffirs by capturing their cattle and burning their kraals.

The General now wished to open direct communication with Col. Hare, who was in command at Fort Hare on the other side of the Amatola Mountains. About the 14th of July he had asked me to join his mess, a very welcome invitation as I had lost my kit in the Burn's Hill affair in April, and never had been properly re-equipped. Walpole having remained at Peddie, I was messing alone. The General's staff consisted of Col. Cloete D.Q.M.G., the principal Staff Officer of the Colony, and Capt. Maitland the General's son and Military Secretary: he had no Aide-de-camp.

On the 23rd. July after a long day spent in reconnoitring learning that the General wanted an officer to ride through the spurs of the Amatas to Fort Beaufort, I at once volunteered for the service, and at 8 p.m. started with a party of twelve Cape Corps men under a Kaffir Sergeant, and a Mr. Hoole a trader, who was supposed to know the way. We had before us a ride of 45 miles to Block Drift or Fort Hare, and of 15 miles beyond that, to Fort Beaufort. Our route lay through the enemy's country entirely as far as Fort Hare, and for a great distance skirted the Amatola range, passing over the spur running to the Keiskamma bush at a point called the Debe Neck, close to the remarkable Tabinoda Mountain.

We had to ford the Buffalo River at King William's Town, and to make our way across the Commatuys, or Saucer Flats, a plain broken into small hollows from two to three feet deep, and six to ten feet across, along the edges of which there was a track not easy to keep to by day, and most difficult at night.

We constantly found ourselves dipping into and out of these saucers, a most fatiguing action both to man and horse. When we reached the Debe Neck we saw, a few hundred yards from our track, the lights of a Kaffir village, which we were glad to pass without being observed. The pathway was very uneven still, being across some dry beds of a water course, which made it difficult to keep my party together. After crossing the Debe Neck Mr Hoole lost his way, and could not find it again. Happily the Kaffir Sergeant was intelligent and faithful, and as soon as I put him in charge of our route, he discovered the path and piloted us safely down to a ford or drift across the Keiskamma, which is a rapid river of some size. We crossed all right, and about 8 a.m.

rode into Fort Hare. Here I left my party and my own horse to rest during the day, and pushed on to Fort Beaufort on a trooper that I borrowed from a Cape Corps man at the post. I thus was able to reach Beaufort by 11 o'clock, and reported myself to Col. Hare.

After a long conference with him and Sir Andries Stockenström we arranged a plan of combined operation between Col. Hare's Division and that of Col. Somerset, which was to come off on a certain day, the two divisions attacking the Amatolas from opposite sides. After this conference, I breakfasted and then took the opportunity of buying a couple of horses, and doing some shopping in the town. I dined at 4p.m. and at 6 started back for Headquarters, taking with me one of my new horses - an active little chestnut - which was a pleasure to ride. I reached Fort Hare at 8.30 P.M. and at 10, set out on my return march. My party and their horses were well rested and refreshed, but I had ridden 30 miles further than they had and had not taken a moment's rest. I therefore found the second night's ride very trying, and was anxious as to how we should get across the Keiskamma and the Nek, should the Kaffirs have seen our spoor and expect our return. We cleared the river without incident, but at the Nek my men lost themselves in the mazes of the water-course, and when the party was broken up, I saw lights flitting from hut to hut in the Kaffir village and thought that we were discovered. However no enemy appeared, and in a few minutes I got my party together with as little noise as possible and we proceeded on our way. When we reached the open flat I was so dead tired that I got off my horse and had an hour and a half's good sleep in one of the saucers mentioned above. Soon afterwards day dawned, and we made our way back to the camp on the Gonaio about noon, having ridden over 120 miles in about 40 hours, during 28 of which I was in the saddle.

The General expressed satisfaction, so I was amply rewarded. I enjoyed this period of my service intensely, as may well be believed. I was constantly in the saddle, riding about with the General who was a most agreeable companion, and as an old soldier full of the experiences of the Peninsular and Waterloo, he was an object of veneration to me. He would allow me to draw him out, and in his turn kindly placed confidence in me, young as I was. I endeavoured to make myself generally useful as a Staff Officer, helping Col. Cloete with his correspondence, and always ready for a dash at the Kaffirs.

Our combined movement came off, but did not produce any very great result. Col. Somerset succeeded in capturing thousands of cattle in the plains, but not much progress was made towards bringing the war to an end. The General, who had served in Canada and seen the vast forest fires there, had an idea that we might distress the natives by burning the Amatolas, but he did not take into account the difference between the resinous pines of Canada and the ever-green

trees of the Cape. By his orders I made a huge stack of dry wood - the fences of Kraals &c - round a big yellowwood tree and made a blazing bonfire which burnt for an hour, with the effect only of singeing the leaves, but not setting fire to the tree, so he was convinced that this method was of no use.

At this time I was slightly wounded whilst throwing up a battery at night to protect our camp. The Kaffirs used to burn the grass round our positions and seeing them so engaged whilst my men were working in the dark, I rode forward to try and surprise them with my covering party; but one of my sentries - a Hottentot levy - seeing a figure moving in the dark, let drive at me. His musket was loaded with "loopers", which hit me in three places. Happily I was not much hurt, but had to lie still for a few days. At the end of three months with the General, as his Engineer on the Staff, we returned, after many expeditions, to the Fish River. Capt Walpole was then recovering from his wounds, and took me down to Graham's Town for a short leave, at the end of which I was ordered to take up my quarters at the mouth of the Fish River, where Lieut. Owen, the senior subaltern R.E. in the Colony, had been stationed to ensure the maintenance of a Flying Bridge designed to keep up communication between Graham's Town and Fort Peddie. It was considered only fair to Owen that he should now be with the General, as Walpole was not yet well enough to remain in the field. The change from active life to the monotonous routine in a swamp at the Fish mouth soon made me ill, and I became so reduced by dysentery that I had to be taken into Graham's Town. Directly I was better I returned to my post, but was soon worse than before and again sent in to be treated. My kind old Chief received me each time in his comfortable quarters, where he eventually left me in charge when he returned to the front. The dysentery was followed by a severe attack of rheumatic gout, which kept me in bed for six weeks, and on crutches for some weeks longer. This illness put an end to any further campaigning for the moment; I had to remain in Graham's Town, and as soon as I was convalescent, I took up the duties of the Engineer of fine during Capt. Walpole's absence.

Sir Henry Pottinger had now succeeded Sir Peregrine Maitland as Governor, and Lt. General Sir George Berkeley had taken over the command of the forces.

The Kaffirs were gradually being subdued; and Sandilli had been made a prisoner and sent to Cape Town. On leaving the Colony, Sir Peregrine Maitland was pleased to mention me in his parting General Order.

Copy of General Order published by General Sir P. Maitland on retiring from the command of the army in the Cape of Good Hope, bringing to the notice of her Majesty's Government the good conduct

of the troops serving in Kaffirland.

Head Quarters. Butterworth. 6th January 1847.

(I) The Commander in Chief having been recalled by Her Majesty's Government the command at the Frontier will devolve on Col. Somerset K.H. who is hereby appointed Colonel on the Staff

.....

(5) His Excellency having endeavoured to render his personal services useful to the Forces employed in the Field during the course of eight months, is enabled to enjoy the pleasing task of recording with confidence his testimony of their exemplary conduct: and he takes this opportunity of returning to the troops of every rank and description his thanks for their exertions during that period, often under circumstances unusually difficult and discouraging.....

(9) To the Officers of the Staff His Excellency offers his best thanks for their unwearied assistance: particularly to Lt. Col. Cloete D.Q.M.G., Capt. C.L. Maitland, Asst. Mil Secy., Lieuts. Owen and Stokes, R.E., acting occasionally as A.D.C.; Major O'Reilly, Brigade Major, commanding the Graham's Town district: Major Smith and Lieut. Bissel. D.A.Q.M.G.

(signed) A.J. Cloete. D.Q.M.G.

I remained in Graham's Town till October 1847 and during my illness and afterwards, became very intimate with the family of Mr Charles Maynard, who were most kind to me in many ways. The two eldest daughters, Fanny and Etta were then pretty girls of twenty and a half and nineteen years of age, very gay and the belles of the town. It is not surprizing that I fell in love. I became engaged to Etta, just about the time of her Mother's death, on the 22nd. July 1847. This sad event of course drew us all very close together. It was soon made known that we were engaged.

In the following September, owing to Lieut. Owen's health failing, I was ordered to the front again, and early in October went up to King William's Town, where the headquarters camp was now formed. There we lived in huts, and eventually built stone barracks. The most interesting work of that time was making more secure the communication between King William's Town and our advanced camp in the Amatola Mountains.

This Camp was occupied by the 1 st. Battn. Rifle Brigade under Col. George Buller, and was situated in the Keiskamma Hoek or basin. It lay on the further side of the Keiskamma, an impetuous stream liable to sudden floods which cut off the camp from all communication. I

therefore threw a light span bridge over this torrent, and laid out and made an improved road through the mountains, during the months of November and December.

Two days before Christmas our new Governor General, Sir Harry Smith, the hero of Aliwal, who had succeeded Sir H. Pottinger as Governor and also taken command of the troops, arrived at King William's Town, and held a great meeting of the Kaffirs and their Chiefs, who all made submission and accepted the new order of things. This advanced the frontier of the Colony to the Keiskamma and formed the large area between that river and the Kei into a Protectorate to be called "British Kaffraria".

For the three years following this settlement I and other Engineers were employed in establishing a hold on the country. Fortified Barracks were built at King William's Town, Forts Murray, Glamorgan, Cox, White and Hare, which thus established a chain of posts from the sea at the Buffalo mouth to Fort Beaufort in the Old Colony.

At King William's Town I built a very good house to which I hoped to bring my bride, but all at once I was ordered to East London, at the mouth of the Buffalo, to continue building Fort Glamorgan.

On the 6th. February 1849, I married my dear wife, Henrietta second daughter of Mr Charles Maynard of Graham's Town. Lieut. Stanton Q.E. was my best man. At the same time her elder sister was married to Capt. Thomas Hare of the Cape Mounted Rifles, nephew of the old Colonel who was Lieutenant Governor when I went out. The double ceremony was performed in Graham's Town Church by Archdeacon Merriman and the Revd. J. Heaviside. Stanton drove me down in his dog-cart, both of us being in full dress. I originally had but a fortnight's leave from my station, Fort Glamorgan, at the Buffalo mouth, but happily I got an extension of leave for another fortnight, five days of which however, were taken up in travelling by Ox-waggon for the 110 miles that we had to cover to reach my post.

Lieut. Inglis whom I succeeded had built a stone hut of one room of very good size, to which I added, and had thus a home for my wife, but nothing like the one I had prepared at King William's Town. Here we lived for fifteen months, and our eldest child was born.

CHAPTER 3

My Second Kaffir War.

From East London I was, in June 1850, suddenly ordered to King William's Town again, but I could not occupy my own house, as it had been let to Government, I had therefore to purchase a cottage, and again to enlarge. My wife and child went to her Father's at Graham's Town for a few weeks whilst this was being done. We were soon very comfortably settled, and Mimmie, Etta's sister, came to stay with us.

King William's Town - as capital of British Kaffraria - was becoming very popular, and with so many officers' wives, became a very gay place. We even gave dances in our cottage, which were much appreciated.

In December 1850, however, there was a great and sudden change. Sir Harry Smith came up to the frontier, and being dissatisfied with the conduct of the Kaffirs, made a march through the Amatolas, with a tolerably strong body of men. He had however not taken an accurate measure of the feeling that he was likely to arouse by this military promenade: his force was suddenly attacked in a difficult defile by a strong body of Kaffirs, who drove him out of the mountains, prevented his falling back on King William's Town, and forced him into Fort Cox in the heart of the mountains, the very difficult position, close to Burn's Hill, where we were defeated in 1846.

King William's Town was thus left in a most critical condition, Sir Harry's force having been drawn from our garrison, we had but some 300 men left to guard the extensive barracks, store-houses, powder-magazine, and scattered officer's houses, to say nothing of the civil town lying outside our lines. We expected that the Kaffirs would follow up their advantage, and attack us at once, but they missed a good opportunity of providing themselves with lots of plunder, and ammunition.

That did not lessen our fear that they would attack us, or our apprehensions for the mass of helpless women and children and non-combatant traders &c who had during the past few years settled there. We endeavoured to form an inner line behind which we might offer a defence, and every night we made all the women and children take refuge in the officer's mess premises. During the day we had scouts out to give us timely notice of an approaching enemy, and could pursue our avocations, which as far as we soldiers were concerned, lay in doing our best to strengthen our position against a night attack. After a few days we received re-inforcements. Sir Harry Smith, at the head of his men, broke out of Fort Cox, and successfully made his way to King William's Town, where he set to

work to organize powerful divisions with which to punish the Kaffirs.

Capt. Robertson R.E. was at that time my commanding officer, and Lieut. Belfield my subaltern, Capt. Robertson said to me that as I had had the good fortune to see so much active service in the former war Belfield ought to have his turn now, and that he should send him out when called upon for an Engineer officer.

Soon after this I got a message from the General that he wanted to see me. I at once went and the following conversation took place:

Sir Harry Smith. "Col. Cloete has spoken well of your services in the last war: would you like to accompany Col. Mackinnon as staff Officer in his relief of Fort Cox ?"

J.S. "There is nothing I should like better Sir, but Capt. Robertson has said that I am not to go out with the troops, but Lieut. Belfield".

Sir Harry Smith. "I command here Sir, and if I say you are to go, you will go"

J.S. "Thank you, Sir I shall be delighted."

Sir H.S. "Then be ready to go tomorrow morning."

I was delighted at again having an opportunity of distinguishing myself.

Col. Mackinnon was Commissioner for British Kaffraria, and commanded the troops, which consisted of the 6th, 45th and 73rd. Regts, which were distributed among the different forts, several companies of the Cape Mounted Rifles, a battery of Field Artillery, two companies of Sappers & Miners, and some thousands of Hottentot levies from the Western Provinces, who were officered by the farmers and other well-to-do men of the districts in which they were raised. These levies were utterly untrained: they had been hurriedly got together, formed into Companies and Battalions and armed with muskets and bayonets, but of discipline and obedience to orders, or of performing the simplest manoeuvre, they knew nothing: the officers knew just as little of drill as the men. We had some 4,000 of these levies in the 2nd Division, of Col. Mackinnon's and I was the only Staff Officer to lick them into shape. Our regulars were the 73rd. under Lieut. Col. Eyre and later the 6th. under Lieut. Col. Michel. Col. Napier commanded the Cape Mounted Rifles. and Major Wilmot the Royal Artillery.

Our first expedition, early in February, 1851, was to relieve Fort Cox, where the broken column, driven into that place by the Kaffirs

on the 20th. December, was cooped up and short of provisions. The difficulty of forming the force into anything like order may be conceived. By earliest daylight I was in the saddle and endeavouring to get them all under arms. At last I succeeded and we started; the 73rd. in the centre, Cape Corps ahead, and lines of levies in single file on either flank, with the bulk of them in column in the rear of the 73rd. The flanking parties were to prevent surprise, as we had to march through a bushy country where an enemy could be concealed and fire into the column.

We had with us waggons laden with supplies both for the column and to victual Forts White and Cox. Fort White lay about half way between King William's Town and Fort Cox, at that Debe neck which I crossed two nights running in 1846. We met with no serious opposition, but the difficulty of restraining such levies was amply shown. Whenever a few Kaffirs on the flanks fired a shot or two, the levies would turn and pour volley after volley into the bush, without seeing any one to shoot at - thousands of rounds of ammunition were thus wasted. We brought away the men who had to leave Fort Cox. and having victualled the place returned to King William's Town in about a week. sir Harry Smith was so well pleased with Col. Mackinnon's report of the way I had performed my duty, that he made me Deputy Assistant Quarter Master General to the 2nd. Division, and for six months I was constantly on the move, as we beat up the enemy's quarters in every direction. I cannot go into detailed particulars of these operations, it would take up too much time. I confine myself to one or two incidents, and their general description which will give an idea of the kind of work.

Soon after the patrol above mentioned, we were startled one morning to hear that the Cape Mounted Rifles had deserted to the enemy, taking with them their arms and ammunition. This defection was a very serious business, as these were really the most useful men we had, they also as I said before, carried the most serviceable weapon in our force, and they were splendid shots. As scouts they were perfect and could see a Kaffir where no Englishman would even think of looking for one. What was to be done? A new force was at once organized by Major Armstrong of the C.M.R. drawn from the levies whom I have described; the best of these men were selected - good riders - with Ensign Patrick Robertson of the C.M.R. as their Adjutant. The force was called "Armstrong's Horse" and soon became very efficient. Major Armstrong himself was prevented by ill-health from being often out with them, but Pat Robertson, (afterwards General Robertson-Ross) earned a great name by his daring courage, activity, and powers of endurance. Our patrols were generally directed towards inflicting loss on the enemy by burning their kraals and seizing their cattle. It was only when we took their cattle that they would come out and fight us at close quarters. One patrol which we made into the Keiskamma Hoek

will give a good idea of this. one evening Pat Robertson went off with some 200 of Armstrong's Horse and we followed with the Infantry soon after midnight, on the road I had made two years before. After a long toilsome march we descended into the valley soon after it was daylight and found that the "Horses" had captured some 1500 head of cattle, which they had driven into the open valley. After giving our men a rest we set to work to bring these through the bush and over the hills away from the mountains. The Kaffirs gathered in great numbers and by their shouts made the cattle very unmanageable, whilst they kept up a hot fire on the column. Happily they were not all armed with muskets, those they had were mostly flint-locks, and they shot badly, or we must have suffered very heavily. We could not tell what loss we inflicted, but, when they came near enough to throw assegais, even Brown Bess must have hit some of them.

We told off the levies to drive away the cattle, and the 73rd. threw out skirmishers to keep down the fire of the enemy. After a running fire of many hours we succeeded in this way in bringing the whole body of cattle into the more open ground between the mountains and King William's Town, but not without losing several men. On another occasion we made a long patrol into the inner recesses of the Amatolas, and were fortunate enough to come across the deserters from the Cape Corps, who first of all held a knoll commanding a high ridge along which we were marching, and poured a heavy fire into the head of the column. Being quickly driven out of this, they fell back into a deep, thickly wooded valley, below the narrow track along which our men had to march in single file.

From this shelter they fired up at us and hit some of our men. The regiment however delivered such a telling volley into the wood that, as we heard afterwards, the greater number of these deserters met their reward. We certainly never afterwards came across them. I had personally a very narrow escape. A man was wounded close to me and I dismounted to help him. The surgeon who attended to his wound told me in the evening, that he saw a bullet strike the rock close to my head as I bent over the man.

It is useless to recount the history of these patrols, we were out week after week in all directions, beating up the enemy, and no patrol went out that I did not accompany as the Staff Officer until in July Sir Harry Smith sent for me one morning and told me that he had just got despatches from home, and was very sorry to say that the Duke of Wellington, the Commander-in-Chief, did not approve of Officers of Royal Engineers being appointed to the Staff of the army, and that therefore he must send me and Lieut. Jesse, who held the same appointment with the first division at Fort Hare, back to our corps duties. He was entirely satisfied with the way in which we had done our work, but he had to obey orders. At the same time he said that my

period of service abroad having expired, and Lieut. Fowler R.E. having arrived in the Colony, he was prepared to allow me to return home, or to remain till the end of the war if I wished it. I thanked him very warmly, and said that if I could have continued to render special service in the way he had called for it, I would gladly have remained, but that under the circumstances, there being no very important Engineer duties to be done, my wife's health being delicate, and my Father a very old man, I should prefer to take advantage of his permission to go home. He published a very gratifying general order about my services, which, with others in which from time to time he had acknowledged them on special occasions, I have much pleasure in reproducing here - as well as a letter from Sir Harry Smith to Lord Clarence Paget, who at that time held office under his father the Marquis of Anglesea, the Master General of the Ordnance. I also give a memorandum which he wrote concerning me a year later, in which he refers to that letter, and other extracts, from Dispatches &c.

General Orders. NO.131 .

Head Quarters,

King William's Town

July.9th 1851

His Grace The Commander-in-Chief having disapproved of officers of the Royal Engineers being appointed to the General Staff, His Excellency is consequently deprived of the services of Lieuts. Jesse and Stokes, Royal Engineers, as D. Assistants Q.M.General. These officers returning to the duties of their Corps carry with them the Commander-in-Chief's most unqualified approbation and admiration of their services in their important positions, and it will be a most gratifying duty His Excellency owes them, to bring their names to the Master General's notice in the strongest terms. The services of these officers on the Staff of the Army will be discontinued from the 1st proximo.

(signed) A.J.Cloete. Lt.Col.
D.Q.M.G.

No 141

Head-Quarters

King William's Town.

July 23. 1851.

Lieut. Stokes, Royal Engineers, Deputy Assistant Quarter-Master -General to the 2nd Division, having been ordered home on being relieved by Lieut. Fowler, will proceed to Cape Town for embarkation to England to join his corps. The Commander-in-Chief has taken occasion to notice this officer's services repeatedly. He has been out with every large patrol of the 2nd division since the breaking out of the war displaying a degree of zeal, intelligence, and gallantry the just admiration of Colonel Mackinnon and the Officers commanding.

It is most gratifying to His excellency to convey to this Officer on leaving the army the sense he entertains of his merits and qualifications, which His Excellency hopes may lead him to the highest position in his profession open to all who by zealous exertion deserve to attain it.

My dear Lord Clarence Paget,

As no veteran better knows the value of a good Staff of fixer than the Master General, I should be very much obliged to you to lay before the Marquis of Anglesea, how much I have had occasion to value and appreciate the services of Lieut Stokes of the Royal Engineers, whom, from the scarcity of officers, and the zeal and ability he displayed in the former Kaffir war, I was induced to appoint Deputy Assistant Quarter Master General, until relieved by Lieut. Fowler R.E.

His Grace the Duke of Wellington also objected to Officers of Engineers being employed in appointments foreign to their legitimate duties. Lieut. Stokes was attached six months to the 2nd Division under Colonel Mackinnon. I assure you no Staff Officer of his experience, and which is great in Kaffir war-fare, ever evinced greater zeal and ability. He accompanied every patrol, and his gallant conduct in the field was ever as conspicuous as his arrangements in Camp and on the march. Such an Officer would be invaluable in regular armies; and he has had, with the rudely composed troops of this army, every opportunity to show his aptness for service with soldiers in the field; and most cheerfully and ably has he availed himself of it to the admiration of every officer. I therefore desire to pay the debt of gratitude I especially owe to this gallant officer for the services he has ever rendered, by thus requesting you to lay them before the Master General.

Believe me &c.

(signed) H.G. Smith

(true copy. J.Stokes)

the 20th Decr. 1851.

My dear Stokes,

The enclosed is a copy of an extract Sir John Burgoyne gave me to circulate among our Brother Officers here and at Chatham and as it contains much that concerns you, and of so complimentary a kind - Colonel Sandham has suggested that I should make you acquainted with what Sir Harry has said - and

accordingly I send you the extract for your own keeping. Is it not arranged that you are to come to the Academy to succeed Capt. Scott? With kind remembrances to all with you, I remain,

very sincerely yours,
J. Walpole.

Extract from letter from Lieut. Genl. Sir Harry Smith to Sir John F. Burgoyne. dated King William's Town. (Cape of Good Hope)
4. October 1851

"I have 120 Sappers here now, under as gallant a fellow as ever lived, Capt. Robertson: these men are the finest soldiers I almost ever saw and have taken their turn of most arduous patrol duty, heart and soul"

"Hereafter I shall have lots of defensible barracks, as forts, to build, and then their services in their own peculiar line will come into play."

Your Officers have required no favour with me, for their zeal and ability attracted my admiration. "

There is a Lieut. Stokes fit to be an Assist. Quarter Master General. to a Peninsular Division - a regular John Bull, - it is a pity such a fellow should not be allowed always to soldier, and be released from your salient and re-entering angles, fascines, parapets, bastions, and breaches!--he has a turn for them, but is even more at home with the Qua:Mas:Genl's Department - but the dear old Duke did not approve. With regard to our indomitable enemy - some days he hides, as the Troops penetrate his country:- at others, his blood is up, and he will fight like a Roman Gladiator, especially if his quick eye discerns a little looseness in our troops entering the bush - he is a different being this war - the Circassians and Algerines are not more formidable, and a devil of a prophet animates them with implacable hatred to the white man, who has done so much to ameliorate their savage condition. This however I would soon have dealt with, but when they fraternized with the ungrateful beasts of Hottentots, so domesticated with us for many years, the general combination against everything white became most formidable, and still requires to be subdued. I have however, now got a good lot of Troops I can depend on, and so soon as the 60th are on their marching legs, I shall move troops everywhere among them. But unless they choose to shew, 10,000 may march through their mountains and not see one of them.

Head Quarters. King William's Town.
7th Feb. 1851.

General Orders. No.26.

The commander-in-Chief having Colonel Mackinnon's report on his three days movements in the command of a strong patrol for the purpose of punishing the Chief Seyolo for his rebellious conduct, and of endeavouring to apprehend the so called Prophet Umlangeni, has great pleasure in publishing the sub joined extract from that report. This duty has been most successfully and energetically performed in most trying weather and His Excellency begs to assure Colonel Mackinnon of his marked approbation, and that he will not fail to lay before Her Majesty's Government a Report which reflects so much credit upon the Colonel himself, the Officers named in the Report, and the Officers and soldiers generally.

We captured on the whole about 800 head of cattle, about 100 of which were lost last night by the carelessness of the cattle guard.

Our casualties amounted to one Fingo killed. If the weather had favoured us more I have no doubt that we should have captured larger numbers of cattle, but during the whole three days it was most unfavourable to our operations.

The cheerfulness and good spints shown by the Troops during three most trying days was all that could be desired.

I have to thank Lieut. Stokes, Royal Engineers, D.A.Q.M.G. of my

Division and for the able assistance they rendered me.

(signed) A.J. Cloete Lt. Col:

D.Q.M.

G.

Head Quarters
King William's Town.
1 9th Feby. 1851.

General Orders.
No. 39.

The commander-in-Chief having directed a large Force under the Command of that able and distinguished of ficer Col. Mackinnon, to march from King William's Town for the immediate purpose of conducting a reinforcement of the Royal Artillery and a Battalion of the newly raised Levies, composed chiefly of Englishmen, to Fort Hare, and, upon the return of the Force, of harrassing and attacking the enemy should he appear, has great satisfaction, having received Col. Mackinnon's Report of his six days consecutive operations, in expressing his marked

approbation of the soldierlike manner in which this service has been carried out.

The conduct ofCol. Mackinnon particularly mentions and Lieut. Stokes of the Royal Engineers, D.A.Q.M.G. of the Division

His Excellency desires to assure these officers that their services, which have been thus placed prominently before him, shall be brought to the notice of His Grace The Commander-in-Chief.

(signed) A.J.
Cloete. Lt Col.

D.Q.M.G.
Head Quarters. King William's Town.
3rd March. 1851

General Orders. No.49.

The Commander-in-Chief has again the gratification to record the successes of the patrols under the Command of Col. Mackinnon, and Col. Eyre, which marched on the 25th & 26th ulto. to drive the rebel Chief Seyolo from his location which so interrupted the communication with Graham's Town, to spoil his cattle and show him the day of retribution is at hand. This by Col. Mackinnon's judicious movements has been well effected and the Troops have returned after five days operations to King William's Town.

In the course of the operations against this treacherous Chief 1636 head of cattle, exclusive of those taken by mistake on the first occasion, have been captured by the Troops, and by the Fingoes from Fort Peddie, placed under the spirited Mr Webb to intercept fugitive cattle.

Col. Mackinnon closes his report in the following terms.

I have to express my thanks toI have also great satisfaction in expressing my sense of the services of Lieut. Stokes of the Royal Engineers, D.A.Q.M.G.....

(signed)A.J. Cloete.

D.Q.M.G.
Head Quarters.
King William's Town.
26th March 1851

General Orders.

No.66

It is with pride and satisfaction the Commander-in-Chief desires to express his marked approbation of the conduct of the Troops of the 2nd Division under Col. Mackinnon which accompanied His Excellency in the prosecution of continued movements from the 18th to the 25th March, during which there were three sharp affairs with the enemy, one near Fort Hare, the other under and at the back of the Tabendoda mountains or Slambie's Kop, the third at Fort Wilshire, occasioning in the two former a loss to the enemy of 77 killed and one prisoner, and many stands of arms; in the latter several killed and nearly 1000 of beautiful cattle with horses, goats &c. A distance of more than 126 miles was marched by the Troops in five days during an intense heat and suffering from a want of water. Upon the last day's march not an individual of the enemy ever showed himself. In these laborious Kaffir Campaigns, the great object is to carry on operations rapidly and at a distant point, hence the fatigue is excessive. When all Ranks distinguish themselves those alone can be named who fill high positions in command or have special opportunities to distinguish themselves.

The Commander-in-Chief conveys his best thanks. Never did Troops, enduring such heat and thirst march greater distances in higher spirits, and His Excellency trusts that by continuing the lessons taught the savage, this laborious War may speedily be brought to a conclusion.

The Commander-in-Chief is greatly indebted to
D.A.Q.M.G. Lieut. Stokes R.E. has added to the knowledge his scientific Corps expects, a zeal for the service, and general ability, which will render him a very superior Officer.....

(signed)A.J. Cloete. Lt.
Col. D.Q.M.G.

Head Quarters
King William's Town. 17th May. 1851.

General Orders. No. 103.

The Commander-in-Chief has received Col. Mackinnon's Report of his operations between the 8th and 16th inst. from the head quarters to the Windvogelberg, the upper Kei &c. these long and arduous marches were as well made as they were necessary to effect the service required, and energetically were they sustained, and with every vigour and perseverance by the Troops---- 300 head of cattle have been wrested from the enemy in his strongest holds, and, which is of great importance, he has been taught that while one Column of Her Majesty's Troops can penetrate through the most difficult passes of the Amatolas, even to the Bonte-Bok Flats, another by a simultaneous movement can sweep round the mountains and threaten the Transkeian Kaffirs, spreading terror thereby among them, as well as showing the Gaiekas the insecurity of their present position.

Col. Mackinnon expresses his satisfaction with the exertions of the Officers and Men and his thanks for the aid he received from.....

Lieut. Stokes.....

(signed) A.J. Cloete. Lt. Col.

D.Q.M.G.

Belmont House.

Havant.

I 3th August. 1852.

Lieut. Stokes Royal Engineers was under my command in the Kaffir War of 1850-51. His ability in his own Military Branch brought him especially to my notice and I appointed him D.A.Q.M.G. of the Troops most actively employed in the Field against a numerous and active enemy. My selection of Lt. Stokes for this duty was most fortunate and of great advantage to the service. I never saw any young Staff officer display higher talents than did he in every branch of his varied duties - and his gallantry was as conspicuous as his Field arrangements were judicious: he was ordered to England much to my disappointment. I wrote very strongly in his favour to the Master General, Lord Anglesea, who was good enough to acknowledge the receipt of my recommendations and to express his gratification that Lieut. Stokes had so highly deserved my approbation.

(signed) H.G. Smith.
M. General.

(true copy. J. Stokes.)

In June 1851 we had to make arrangements for going home, which meant a good deal of packing up, and the sale of my two houses at King William's Town, of my horses, and furniture, and the greater part of my books, which latter I have always regretted, but we had to reduce our baggage as much as possible. We took waggon to East London, where we were to embark on H.M.S. "Dee" commanded by Lieut. West R.N. There was a heavy swell as we went out in the surf boats and the "Dee" was rolling fearfully she was a paddle steamer, and we had to watch our opportunity as the surf-boat was on the top of a wave to step on to her sponson, which was then level with our gun-wale. Thus my dear wife, who was at that time not strong, was handed on board - then the baby, then her nurse - and I followed. West made us as comfortable as possible, giving us his own cabin. My wife lay on a locker, and I on a mattress on the floor. The vessel rolled so that in the night, to my horror, I felt the locker, which was really a chest of drawers with a mattress upon it, coming over on me. I at once propped it up with all my strength and called for help, when they came and corded it up to rings in the ship's sides so that it could not move.

We lay off the Buffalo all the next day waiting for the General's despatches which we had to take down to Cape Town to be sent to England. After we started the weather moderated and in time got so pleasant that we much enjoyed the voyage down to the Cape, coasting, as we did within easy sight of the shore. We landed at Simon's Town and drove across to Cape Town, some fifteen miles, passing through Rondebosch and Wynberg. We went to my wife's Aunt, Mrs De Villiers, her godmother also, who put us up most kindly for the six weeks we were there, and who moreover, tenderly nursed her niece when Charles Edward was born, on 20th August, about three weeks after our arrival. My wife had another Aunt living at Cape Town, Mrs de Smidt, with several daughters, of whom we saw a good deal: they lived in the Castle. After my wife recovered we also saw the Cloetes of Wynberg - relations of the old Colonel who had been such a good friend to me - and of Henry Nourse one of the Maynard cousins, whom I had known at Graham's Town.

In September a passage was given us in the Troopship "Birkenhead" going home nearly empty, she was a fine paddle-wheel steamer of good power and speed, built of iron, originally a frigate, but, not answering for that purpose, she had been cut down to be a troopship. We had to join her at Simon's Town, and to steam out of False Bay in the teeth of a fierce S.E.gale. It took us twelve hours to reach the offing, when we could turn before the wind, and then we had a prosperous voyage home, without again meeting a head wind. Among our fellow passengers were, Pat Robertson and his Bride, my wife's younger sister.

We had to lie three days at St. Vincent to take in coal, and arrived at Plymouth on the 25th. October, in 37 days, or 34 days under steam which was considered a good passage then. We did not land at Plymouth but went on to Portsmouth, where I found Sir Frederick Smith, who had been my Chief at Chatham, Commanding Royal Engineer. He and Lady Smith gave us a kind welcome, and we went on to London as soon as we could.

CHAPTER IV. Life in England.

On my arrival in London I was very kindly received by Col. Matson, who was D.A.G. for Royal Engineers at that time, and I found my dear old friend Col. Sandham also at the Ordnance Office as Assistant Inspector General. I got leave at once, and we went off to Cobham, where the most loving greeting and welcome awaited us.

Before very long I was appointed Assistant Instructor in Surveying and Field Works at the R.M. Academy. The duties of this post consisted in teaching these subjects to the Cadets of the Practical Class in the Royal Arsenal at Woolwich. I was not to take up the appointment till after the Cadets' Christmas vacation, so that I had nearly three months clear time before me. My wife and I were most kindly received by all our old friends round Cobham, and we had plenty of entertainments, whilst I had the pleasure of shooting at Cobham, Camer and elsewhere. It was a very great delight to be in the old home again and to find my Father in fairly good health, though getting feeble, and my Mother very well, strong and energetic as ever. He was then nearly 79, she was in her 61st year. My old friend and playfellow the Earl of Darnley had married in 1850 and his eldest son Lord Clifton was born the day after our Charles. His brothers and sisters were at that time all un-married.

In January 1852 we settled at Woolwich Arsenal, my duties were very interesting young Cadets are always fresh and amusing - and generally clever. I got nearly £100 a year and quarters in addition to my Engineer pay, so that with care we were comfortably off. I had much time at my disposal, having only to devote the second half of each week to instructing; and twice a year I got six weeks vacation. Of course I had to get up my subjects, but really had much leisure, and was truly contented with my lot, and thankful for it. I was able to go to Cobham very often to see my people there and to shoot and play cricket, for which I had always a passion. I became a member of the Cobham Cricket Club which was a strong one. Lord Darnley gave us a splendid ground in his park, and among the members there were such good cricketers as Edward and Henry Bligh who both played for the county. We thus held our own against the best town and country elevens of Mid Kent.

My brother Edward had at this time attained an important position at Oxford. He had become Proctor and Censor of Christ Church where he was one of the senior tutors. He had been University Preacher and was then Whitehall Preacher, a great distinction. He was much beloved for his charming disposition and holy irreproachable life, while his wit and gaiety of heart made him most popular. He was the truest and most loyal friend a man could have, - he and I were bound together not only by the ties of strong brotherly love but by those of true friendship. One of my greatest pleasures was to pay him a visit

at Christ Church, and thus mingle with his friends and see the warmth of attachment which bound them to him.

In June 1852 he invited us with several members of the Maynard family for Commemoration. We were a party of about twelve; he gave us entertainments of every sort, including an evening party in the Common Room at Christ Church, - an unprecedented event, - rowing parties on the river, an expedition to Blenheim, visits to the Colleges and Chapels, and the great Assembly in the Theatre. We had perfect summer weather and the whole thing went off well.

In April 1853 our son, Arthur, was born and from the first caused us much anxiety, for he had a cleft in his palate. My dear Mother came to us at once, and took him away with her to Cobham, feeling sure that she could succeed in rearing him.

In February 1854 came a change in our life. war had been going on in 1853 between Russia and Turkey, which had excited a great feeling in England, and a strong desire to prevent Russia from vanquishing her foe and becoming mistress of Constantinople. Her secret intention of breaking up the Turkish Empire, had been revealed to our Ambassador, and the destruction of the Turkish Fleet at Sinope had shown that she might carry it out. Early in 1854 the Government began to prepare for the struggle which was becoming inevitable. This affected me in the following way. one of the steps taken was to increase the Corps of Royal Engineers, which gave me promotion to the rank of Captain. A force of 20,000 men was concentrated at Malta, and I at once volunteered for the East, and interested all my friends to get me appointed to the Staff of the Field Army that was forming. Col. Matson the Deputy Adjt.Genl. however threw cold water on my ambition, and told me that I could not possibly be allowed to quit the duties on which I was engaged: all Officers instructing Cadets would be required to give their experience and stick to their work in order to prepare the greater number of young men that must necessarily be commissioned.

During the summer vacation Edward and I had a delightful excursion together; we went into North Wales to stay with his friends the William Jelfs, who were living in a cottage under Cadr Idris, on the road between Dolgelly and Barmouth. We had spent a night at Nearwell, Shrewsbury, with my wife's uncle Mr William How. whence we took coach to Llangollen and thence to Dolgelly. Jelf met us there and we drove to Caerdeon, where he was building a fine house. From Caerdeon we made long walking expeditions, and sometimes took coach, reaching Conway with its fine old castle, Carnarvon, the Menai Bridge, - climbing Snowdon from Capel Curig-descending to Llanberis and scaling grand old Cadr. Mrs Jelf had excited my desire to sketch in water-colours, and had given me some instructions in her own bold style, and this gave additional

interest to our walks. I sketched and Edward wrote poetry, when we halted where a good view or some old legend arrested our attention. He had a great facility for rhyming, and a most poetic fancy, and produced many pretty things which have been printed for private circulation since his lamented early death.

In the autumn we had to leave our house in the Arsenal, as it was wanted to make room for more Cadets, so we took a house on the common.

On my return from Wales we began to hear of the events taking place in the Crimea.

My Brother-in-law, Pat Robertson had joined the 4th Regiment and gone out to the Crimea. His wife came to stay with us in order to get the earliest news of her husband.

It was a very anxious time. After each battle - The Alma, Balaclava, Inkerman, - we used to hear of heavy losses, but many days, sometimes weeks, would pass before names were published.

On the 29th. December our dear son Frank was born.

All this time I was dying to get out there, and as I had some special work to do in a room adjoining Col. Matson's in Pall Mall, I saw a good deal of him and frequently renewed my petition to be allowed to go to the East. As news arrived of the great mortality among our Officers, more especially on account of their heavy duties and great exposure in siege works, he would come into the room deploring these losses, and sometimes saying he did not know where to find Officers to send. I invariably renewed my request. "Oh! No" he would say "you are married; so many married men have been killed, I won't send any more".

At last, in March 1855, I heard that a mixed force of English and Turks - to be called the Turkish Contingent - was to be formed, that General Vivian was to command, and General Michel to be his Chief of the Staff. I had served with Michel at the Cape, and he had sometimes been the Commanding Officer of the patrol when I had been Staff Officer. Through a mutual friend I let him know that I was most anxious to go to the war. He sent for me and asked how he could get me, as he was anxious to do so. I asked for a Staff appointment, "Impossible" he said "every one is promised already", I then said - "A force of 20,000 men of all arms, such as the Contingent is to be, ought to have an Engineer Corps". He saw this at once. "Prepare a paper on the subject that I can show to Lord Panmure (the Secretary of State for War) and come to me tomorrow". This I did, and he approved it so highly, that he took me as well as my paper to Lord Panmure. (For particulars of this paper see note at end of Chapter IV.) His Lordship entered fully into my views and

asked me what would be required. I stated that the nucleus of a force of Sappers and Miners with English Officers ought to be raised to be completed with Turkish artisans from the regiments which were to be handed over to the force; that there should be an equipment of tools of all sorts, and a pontoon train, as well as carts and waggons, horses and drivers.

Lord Panmure - "How long will you require to get this force and equipment together?"

Capt. S. "Three months, if I have not to deal with the Ordnance Department, but may purchase all my stores direct from Contractors."

Lord Panmure. -"Very good, set to work to form your Engineer Corps, and get your equipment."

This was really a herculean task, but I set to work with a will, and kept my word, for in three months the whole were on board ship, except the horses, which had to be bought in Hungary. Fortunately for me I had been engaged in a labour of love which furnished me with exactly what I wanted, namely a carefully prepared list of the tools for an Engineer Field Equipment. Owing to the many shortcomings that the army in the Crimea was experiencing, Capt. Collinson R.E. being on duty at Woolwich had been requested to sketch out a proper Engineer equipment for an army in the field. It may be hard to believe, but such an equipment had not been laid down.

Collinson knowing of my Cape experiences, had asked me to help him in the task, and as I had more spare time than he, I had taken the lion's share of the work. We had formulated a complete scheme for this equipment a few weeks before I saw Lord Panmure, and thus I had the advantage of being prepared at once with all particulars elaborated with the care and foresight that Collinson devoted to every matter he touched. The next thing to do was to devise a method of getting within three months the immense equipment that I needed. My previous experience of the delays of the Ordnance Department whilst making up the pattern waggon of our model equipment, had made me stipulate for power to purchase direct from the Government Contractors. How was this to be managed without my having to do with the payment, which I wished to avoid? Lord Panmure desired me to see the Secretary to the Treasury - Sir Charles Trevelyan - and to lay before him the scheme which his Lordship approved. I found myself in the presence of this Guardian of the public purse, and the following conversation ensued.

Capt.S. "Lord Panmure, Sir, has entrusted me with the formation of an Engineer Corps for the Turkish Contingent, and with the purchase of all necessary stores. As it is imperative to have everything on board ship in three months, and the Ordnance Store-keeper cannot supply me in the time, I propose to obtain all that is required from Contractors, those of the Government if possible."

Sir Charles Trevelyan. "Impossible, quite impossible, it can't be

done."

Capt.S. "But Lord Panmure says it is to be done, Sir."

Sir C.T. "Oh! does he? and pray how do you propose to do it?"

Capt.S. "Well, Sir, you can quite see that it is most undesirable that I should have anything to do with the direct payments. I want to be sure of having the best possible tools &c at fair prices, and that they shall be promptly delivered. I propose that, as they are supplied, they shall be examined by three competent officers - say Capt. H.G.D. Scott R.E., Capt. Collinson R.E., and Capt. Hugh Bent R.A., and that, on their certificate as to the quantity and quality of the stores, the bills shall be paid."

Sir C.T. "Well! I think that, under the circumstances and with the safeguards you propose, it may be done. put forward the matter officially; but you may consider it arranged."

He then took me into his private room, had a talk about the East, and gave me two copies of a book by Max Muller on the Eastern languages.

I was much pleased that my interview with the dragon of the Treasury terminated so well, and at once set to work to order the innumerable stores required. I visited Birmingham for tools, Beverly, in Yorkshire, for carriages, and got a London firm to manufacture a number of Blanchard's pontoons, which were at that time the approved pattern, as well as to prepare all the subsidiary stores of a pontoon train, with planks &c. for forming the roadway. I also obtained all the harness required for my train from a London firm. One of the most anxious problems in this connexion was the form of carriage for conveying these materials, the service carriage being a most unwieldy lumbering vehicle. In consultation with the Carriage Builders at Beverly I worked out a strong, but much lighter carriage, which I ordered in sufficient quantity for my bridge. I also designed special carts and waggons for carrying entrenching tools, carpenter's tools and smithies.

Horses had to be bought, and for this purpose two officers were despatched to Hungary - my old friend Capt. George Whitmore of the C.M.R. who was then in England, and Capt. G.J. Whyte-Melville, whose name is better known as author of the novel for which he then obtained his materials - "The Interpreter."

One of my first duties was to get officers and to raise a number of artisans of different trades to form the nucleus of an Engineer force, which was to be composed principally of Turks. I proposed to form five companies, as the Royal Engineers could only give me five officers - Capt. Crease and four lieutenants, Whitmore, Beaumont, Maquay and Longley. I obtained Lord Panmure's permission to offer

Captains' commission to four civil Engineers, and secured the services of Messrs. Hartley, Doyne, Bent and Ord.

Capt. Godwin a retired of finer who had gone through a course of military engineering at Chatham, and a Hungarian named Noedl, who had seen service in the rebellion of 1848-50, and who was strongly recommended by Louis Kossuth, were also gazetted Captains. Mr. Allen of the R.E. was appointed Adjutant with the rank of Captain, Mr. Thornett, Quarter Master, and Surgeons Alloway, Gillam, Barnes and Bogle were our Doctors. My Captain and four subalterns of R.E. each received a step of rank locally as I did myself. I got a very smart N.C.O. Sergt. Moore of the Life Guards, as my Sergt. Major.

The recruiting for the companies of Artificers gave rise to an amusing incident. I wanted about a hundred men and was allowed to offer them 5/- a day and their rations, clothing &c. Handbills were circulated which said that I would see candidates at the War Office, which was then in temporary quarters in Whitehall Gardens, where the Board of Trade now is, - where I had an office told off to me, while organizing my force. There is a long passage leading from the open space in front to the main building, and from this passage a narrow staircase led up to my room. (My recruiting Sergeant was one Greed.) I saw each man in my room and examined him as to his qualifications. I was aware that my staircase was blocked with men, but knew nothing of the state of affairs beyond. I presently got a message to say that I must transfer my recruiting business to some other locality as the Secretary of State wanted to go to his room, and could not pass the dense crowd of artisans whom my tempting terms had attracted to the War Office, and who filled the whole place. Every idler about Town came to be enlisted, and I had a bad time in making my selection. However it was done at length, and I got permission to quarter my force and collect my stores at Tilbury Fort, opposite Gravesend. This was the more convenient for me, as I had given up my house at Woolwich, and taken one in my Father's parish of Milton-next-Gravesend, where my wife would be within easy distance of Cobham Vicarage, and near many of the old friends of my youth. Tilbury was also an excellent place for me to train my recruits, away from the temptations of a garrison town such as Woolwich or Chatham, and handy for embarkation. In those days there was no railway to Tilbury, so that it was quite a country fort.

I got two young men from King's College as clerks. Canon Jelf - the Principal, - a great friend of my brother Edward, - selected them for me, and a very good choice he made. I had them instructed in Photography, and took out with the force a photograph waggon. I also took a printing waggon which proved of immense use to the whole Contingent. Lord Panmure requested me to have hospital waggons fitted out for the whole force - as well, and for this purpose

I went to Messrs. Holmes and co. of Derby - from whom I also got my photographic and printing waggons - and I there saw an excellent light cart that Lieut. Evans had ordered for the Kars Frontier, so I ordered one for my own private use, thinking it would prove serviceable in campaigning as it could go wherever my Engineer train could travel.

It will be easily understood that all the arrangements for the various matters I have briefly sketched, took up my whole time. On my official journeys I managed to have one or two nights at Oxford, and thus to see something of my brother Edward, and from Milford I took an occasional run over to Cobham. By the middle of July I had everything ready for embarkation and the good ships "Lady Ann", and "William", were told off to convey men, officers and stores. They were sailing ships, so that I was able to have a short rest before starting for the East myself. I kept my promise to Lord Panmure and had everything on board by the 25th July, three months after my interview with him. I must say that he gave me every facility for this. I was placed in direct communication for everything I wanted with Mr John Groome, the Chief Clerk. Whenever I required special authority for any expenditure, I wrote a letter, took it to him, and he would get His Lordship's "P" put on it, when it went straight through without any red tape delays. Where full explanation was required I saw the Secretary of State myself, and got the "P", and he would receive me at his house in Belgrave Square, if the matter was pressing. On one occasion I even saw him when he was confined to bed with an attack of gout. I always found him clear-headed and quick to grasp what was wanted, and why, and prompt to decide. It therefore gave me the greatest pleasure to have been able to keep my word to him. So much was added on to what I had engaged to do, that I might not have escaped censure had I failed; but by constant vigilance and pressure upon the Contractors to supply everything well within the time, I succeeded. The greatest difficulty was the pontoon train, because that work was strange to the firm, Dean & co. of London Bridge, who undertook it, and I had to explain every detail, even of construction.

The Hungarian, Capt. Noedl, whom I put in charge of this work, did his duty well and very intelligently. I was ably supported too by all the officers whom I had brought together, but some of them were very young, and the older ones were totally inexperienced in military details. My excellent Adjutant, Capt. Allen, had his hands full in teaching the latter and the recruits the elements of drill. One important person I have omitted, and that was Turabi Effendi, a Turk whom I engaged as interpreter, and to give me and my Officers some smattering of Turkish before taking command of Turkish soldiers.

I was unfortunate enough in the early days of my new command, to give umbrage to my own Corps in the person of Col. Matson. He did

not like my being taken away from the R.M. Academy, and said that he could not give me any R.E. Officers. I however pointed out to Lord Panmure that I ought to have some trained Engineers, and named one senior and three junior subalterns to whom local rank of Captain might be given, and asked for a Captain to be my second in command. Lord Panmure at once gave orders that I should have the assistance I asked for and the officers I named. Matson was very angry, but our dear old chief, Sir John Burgoyne, did not see it in the same light, and the officers were given to me. I had not named the Captain, and the D.A.G. gave me about the least efficient officer of the rank whom he could have chosen. Before leaving I attended the Corps dinner, and Matson attacked me for deserting the Corps and insulting Sir John Burgoyne. I defended myself, and never heard that my brother officers endorsed his view, certainly Sir John did not, but I found afterwards that there was a black mark against me, which I lived to wipe out, for I became eventually D.A.G. myself.

Woolwich Common.
14th April. 1855.

Memorandum on the formation of an Engineer Force for the Turkish Contingent submitted to Col. Michel C.B. Chief to the Staff of the Turkish Contingent.

Every army acting either independently or in conjunction with another army ought to be complete in its organization - in every branch - because it cannot rely with certainty on the assistance of the army with which it is acting for Transport, Ambulances, Tools &c.

This is more especially the case with regard to the engineer branch of an army's organization - because its stores are subjected to such constant wear and tear; that it is difficult to keep them up to the full efficiency, necessary for the army to which they belong, without reference to the wants of any other corps that may be acting with it. Moreover in the operations of a Campaign, an army of the magnitude of the Turkish Contingent, would have its own line of operations, its own front in position. The former would require bridges, the latter entrenchments, for both of which it would be impossible to draw upon any other army for engineers stores or officers. Every day's delay in the formation of an Engineer Force for the Turkish Contingent is of importance at this advanced period of the year.

The artificers to be raised ought to be instructed in military duties and as far as possible initiated in Turkish pronunciation. The bridges and stores must be procured. Under the most favourable circumstances two months must elapse before this Force can leave England, and it ought to be associated with the Turkish portion of the

proposed equipment for some weeks before taking the field, in order that the Turkish Artificers, boatmen &c may be exercised in throwing bridges, throwing up Works &c.

Thus the Engineer equipment can hardly commence active operations before September, at which time 20,000 men will exercise an important influence on the Campaign, but if not ready to move till October or November, it would not be worth while to move them up to the seat of War, when a winter Campaign without the hardening of previous active operations would soon destroy a force so recently raised.

Colonel Michel. C.B Capt J.
Stokes RE

CHAPTER V

The Crimea

At length early in August I started for Constantinople, via Paris, and Marseilles. I had never been in France before, and although I had taken a high place in French at the Academy, had never had any practice in speaking that language. In the hope of one day getting to the Crimea and working alongside the French there, I had during 1854-5 at Woolwich, got a French master to give me lessons, but I was very shy at speaking.

In Paris I found the first French Universal Exhibition in full swing. The Palais de l'Industrie, which was demolished for the great Exhibition of 1900, had been built for it, and Her Majesty Queen Victoria was expected to pay a visit to the Emperor and Empress to see the gallant show.

I stopped a day in Paris for the same purpose, and then sped on my way to the seat of war. Capt. Longley and Turabi Effendi were with me. We joined the "Euphrate", a vessel of the Messageries Imperiales (now Maritimes), on which were several French and English officers and others going out to the Crimea. We touched at the Pireus where we remained several hours so that we were able to land, and drive up to Athens. Our first point was the Acropolis, which we explored as thoroughly as time permitted. We then drove into the City, and had some refreshment. The Acropolis and the ruins of temples around and in it were most interesting, and grand in the extreme, but the City was tame and uninviting, and we were not sorry to say good-bye to it, and to return to our ship. This voyage along the Greek coast and among the islands was very interesting, and the passage through the Dardanelles and the approach to Constantinople even more so. I took up my quarters at first, at Missirie's far famed hotel. Constantinople with all its sights and scenes, its variety of peoples &c was full of novelty and interest to me, but my all-absorbing thought was the Turkish Contingent and our prospect of taking part in the campaign.

Here I found Generals Vivian and Michel and their Staff. Their greeting naturally was "When will your Engineer Corps arrive?" That, of course, depended on the wind, and could not be looked for till the middle of September. It was decided to send up our Quarter Master General, Col. Wetherall, and me to the Crimea to consult with General Simpson, who then commanded the English Army, as to the co-operation of the Contingent in the siege of Sebastopol. We arrived two days before the final assault, and our mission was dependent on the result.

I was most kindly received by General Simpson, whom I had met on a shooting party at Camer, when he was in command at Chatham a year or two before, and General Sir Harry Jones, who commanded the Royal Engineers and directed the siege operations. His A.D.C.~ Lieut.

Cowell, afterwards Sir John Cowell, put me up in his hut. I dined with General Simpson the evening before the assault and he honoured me with a long confidential chat in the verandah after dinner. He was much depressed and evidently very doubtful as to the result. He was in truth too old for such a burden of responsibility as rested upon him, which had come to him by accident, so to speak, from Lord Raglan's death a few weeks before. Simpson had been sent out as Chief of the Staff, and being senior to the other officers out there, had been appointed to the command but he had had no experience to fit him for such a post, and was physically unequal to it.

I offered my services to Sir Harry Jones in the trenches for that day, but he declined them, thanking me, but pointing out that it would not be fair to those who had borne the burden and heat of the day in the trenches all those months, to allow me to take part and perhaps receive some reward to the detriment of one of them. I said that, of course, I fully understood and appreciated his reason, though it had been my duty to make the offer. There was therefore nothing for it, but to go with Wetherall to the best point for viewing the assault, where we also found the Commander of the Sardinian Army, General della Marmora. We were on high ground over-looking the Redan, and had the pain of seeing our men repulsed in their gallant efforts to storm the breach. Below us in the valley to our right was General Eyre's fine Division, which contained many old soldiers, not having been often put in the fore-front of the battles, as had been the case with the Guards and the Light Divisions, - whose young recruits we saw being driven back.

I have always wondered that this strong Division, held in reserve, was not sent in to retrieve our failure. However as the French attack on the MALAKHOFF was successful, the Russians had to evacuate the Redan, and during the night they withdrew all their forces to the north side, and the Allied Armies were left in possession of the fortifications before which they had lain for eleven months. This virtually finished the siege of Sebastopol, and there was very little serious fighting anywhere after it.

I fell a victim that night to the malady which attacked all new comers to the Crimea; as soon as I had descended the hill and reached Headquarters, I was siezed with violent diarrhoea, and lay in much pain in Cowell's hut all night, unable to turn out and witness the magnificent sight of the explosions as the Russians destroyed their magazines whilst evacuating the South side. Two days later, when better, I rode into the place and saw some of the sickening sights of the wounded being brought out of the hospitals where they had been lying almost untended for many hours. Sebastopol having fallen there was no longer any object in sending up the Turkish Contingent to the Crimea, and Wetherall and I were ordered back to Constantinople.

My Corps began to arrive soon after our return, and I was directed to take them up to Varna and there prepare for the Contingent, a small

force of the Turks being sent with me, as the Advanced Guard. We were to prepare landing places, store houses &c. In doing this I soon found what a valuable man I had in Capt. Charles Hartley.

We were not left there many days before we received orders to move across to Kertch, in the Crimea. We had to re-embark the stores that we had landed from the "Lady Anne" - the "William" had not arrived. My horses which had come out on the deck of the "Lady Anne" and had been landed in perfect health, were now shipped on board the "Resolute", the steamer that was to take us across to Kertch, and were stowed in her hold. This was a most unfortunate thing for me, as the heat after the fine sea-breezes to which they had been accustomed on deck for so many weeks, set up in the better of the two inflammation of the lungs of which the poor beast died the day we landed at Kertch. This was a very serious loss to me, for the other was not a horse to knock about on.

We did not stay in Kertch at that time but were ordered to Yenikale, an old Genoese fort, some 8 to 10 miles to the east of Kertch, commanding the Straits of that name leading into the Sea of Azoff. Here, as soon as the "Lady Anne" arrived, I formed a camp of my men. Lieut. General Conyngham soon arrived and took command of such troops of the Contingent as had come up from Constantinople. We found the 71st. Regt., commanded by Lt. Col. Ready, at Yenikale. He was a fine soldier and a very pleasant man from whom I received much kindness.

General Conyngham was naturally most anxious to secure our whole position both at Kertch and Yenikale against any possible attack of the Russian troops which we knew were not very far off, moreover, as winter would be soon coming on, he wished to provide shelter for the 20,000 men that would shortly be concentrated there. In all his schemes he naturally took me, his Chief Engineer, into his counsels, and my officers were busily engaged in making surveys, as well as in landing our stores, and in getting our men into shape, for it must be remembered that they had been hastily enlisted, and were nothing but a collection of artisans with but little training as soldiers. During this busy time I had another equine misfortune. I had bought a pony in Constantinople on which to knock about, and look after works not for speed. Having to accompany the General on a reconnaissance I was mounted on him, the General being on a long-legged fast horse; my poor pony knocked up, and died of inflammation of the lungs just as the other horse had done, so that in less than a fortnight I lost two out of my three horses. Happily I had the chance of buying two excellent nags from Lieut. Drake R.E., whom we found lying desperately ill at Kertch. I persuaded him to go home, which saved his life, and I gladly bought his horses, which did me good service.

To enable me to put the men under cover for the winter, orders were sent to Constantinople for thousands of planks, and for Greek carpenters to come up and erect huts.

General Vivian, who commanded the force and Genl. Michel, the Chief of the Staff, who had introduced me to Lord Panmure, arrived shortly with the whole body of the Contingent, and took up their quarters in Kertch itself. I was ordered to join them there with my Corps, and several houses were allotted to us for quarters, store-houses, and work-shops.

My plans for the defence of the place, and for the hutting of the troops were now, of course, submitted to the superior Generals and met with their approbation.

A large number of men were told off to work daily under my orders and my of fixers were sent to different localities to superintend the extensive and urgent works of all kinds. Capt. Whitmore R.E. was left in charge at Yenikale, and Capt. Hartley at Fort Paul, also an important post, commanding the western extremity of the bay of Kertch, as Yenikale did the eastern out-let. We had taken out with us a field mess kit, so we at once formed a mess in the quarters assigned to us at Kertch, and in a short time made it quite comfortable. We found furniture in all the houses, from which the inhabitants had fled when the place was taken before our arrival.

Genl. Sir Collingwood Dickson R.A. arrived to take command of the Artillery of the Contingent, and was, with his A.D.C., a frequent and welcome guest at our mess.

After several weeks of hard work we were able to get all the troops under cover before the severe weather set in, and we covered the town of Kertch with a continuous line of entrenchments, defended at commanding points by heavy guns. Soon after their completion we fancied that the Russians were about to make the attack for which we had been preparing. There was a dense rolling fog, which caused the alarm to be given, for, seen through it, in the early morning, the rocks and other irregularities lying some two or three hundred yards from our most advanced battery, looked like bodies of troops in movement. The Force was at once ordered to fall in and the regiments despatched to the posts to which they had been told off in the event of an attack. Genl. Vivian and his staff took up a reconnoitring position near the advanced battery, and for some time we expected the attack to develop, but alas! it never came, and we were obliged to admit that our hopes had led us too readily to believe what we so much wished for.

Christmas 1855 was duly observed by the Turkish Contingent Engineer Mess, and we had a merry party of as many English of fixers as we could stow away.

In January Genl. Vivian arrived at the conclusion that the scheme of my Engineer Corps could not be completed as I had intended by drawing Turkish artizans from the regiments; at the same time he expected that we should be employed in the spring in carrying the war into Mingrelia, and we believed that the companies ought to be at full strength. Even as skeleton companies they had done good work and given him every satisfaction, so the General decided to send me home with two officers to raise the necessary recruits and get them out in time for the Campaign of 1856. He wrote at the same time to Lord Panmure, urging that every assistance should be given to me. Accordingly towards the middle of February I started for England with Capt. Allen, my Adjt. and Capt. Hartley.

We embarked on the "Alice Jackson" for Constantinople, and had a terribly rough passage across the Black Sea. We were carried so much out of our course that, on approaching the south coast, the Captain made for what he thought was the Bosphorus, but it proved to be an indentation in the hills known as the "False Bosphorus".

Happily he found out his mistake in time, and put the ship's head about, and steered west. We saw a sailing vessel which had made the same mistake, in great difficulties.

On reaching Constantinople we embarked on the "Indiana", a fine chartered troop ship, which made Malta in fair time after a smooth passage. This was my first visit to Malta and I was much interested in it. My brother officer, Col. Sir William Reid. R.E., the Governor, one of our most distinguished scientific officers, gave me a warm reception and invited me to luncheon. We of course, visited St. John's Church, and were much interested in the mosaics of the floor, the tombs of the old Knights of Malta, and the beautiful picture of the Baptism of Christ over the altar. Our visit to Malta was a hurried one, for we suddenly heard that the French Mail Packet was leaving for Marseilles and we just managed to get on board with our traps. On reaching England I took my family entirely by surprise, as we generally travelled ahead of mails. Arriving at Tonbridge very late in the evening I knew that I could do nothing at the War Office till next day, so I hired a post chaise and drove across to Gravesend where I knocked them up soon after midnight. The servants refused to open the door, and called to their mistress, "He says he is the master, ma'am". My dear wife soon recognized my voice and bade them let me in. our delight at meeting again can easily be imagined. The next day on my return from Town, where I had been to the War Office to report my arrival, I went with my wife over to Cobham to see my aged Father and my Mother. The few weeks that passed before my leaving again for the Crimea in May, gave me frequent opportunities of seeing all my old friends in the neighbourhood of Cobham, and specially my dear brother, Edward, who had been very ill during the spring.

On reaching England we had found that negotiations for peace had begun. I was directed to put myself in communication with Sir Joseph Paxton, who had been instrumental in obtaining for the Government, the artisans and navvies sent out to lay the railway in the Crimea; but the negotiations went on prospering, and eventually Peace was signed, and there was no further occasion to increase my Corps of Engineers at Kertch. On the contrary, it was resolved to disband the Turkish Contingent.

In this interval General Vivian had also arrived in England. I was in constant communication with him and assisted him in drawing up his report on the operations that had been undertaken round Kertch. On his recommendation Lord Panmure, who on my return had given me a very warm reception, and his approval of the performances of my Corps, sent me back with full powers to disband the Turkish Contingent, with authority, under certain general instructions, to decide all points as to the conditions under which the various special officers who had been engaged were to be paid off; to sell all the stores that could not be sent home, and the horses, - both those of my own corps and of the whole Contingent.

In the middle of May I left for the Crimea with the two officers who had accompanied me home. We had a fine passage again, via Malta, Syra, and Smyrna to Constantinople. This visit to Malta was, like my first, a hurried one, so that I did not see very much more of the place, and I have never touched there since.

We speedily got passage from Constantinople to Kertch and this time on a very quick vessel, laden with cattle and sheep for the troops, so much laden that we had positively to walk on the backs of the sheep to get to our cabins. On reaching Kertch we found the whole place in a state of excitement over the impending departure of the force. After communicating to General Michel who commanded, the powers I had received from Lord Panmure, I made all the arrangements for the re-conveyance to England of the Engineer equipment of my Corps, (as that was not to be sold off) and then proceeded to Constantinople to attend to the special duties which had been assigned to me, which however, did not commence till the General had carried out all the necessary orders of the Government for the removal of the force and handing over the Turkish Troops to the Ottoman authorities.

My duties at Constantinople were of a very agreeable nature. Major Brett, the officer in charge of the Turkish Contingent affairs at that place, gave me every facility, and I had the support, in all I did, of Her Majesty's Ambassador, Lord Stratford de Redcliffe. It took me five or six weeks to complete all the arrangements. The sale of several thousand horses and the disposal of a vast quantity of stores, naturally entailed a great amount of anxiety and responsibility: whilst the compensation to be given to officers of various ranks, for which only general rules had been laid down for my guidance, involved a very

considerable amount of labour. The sale of the horses, as I have said, was a matter of great anxiety to me. The British and French armies were at the same time selling off their horses, which were becoming a drug in the market. At first I got very fair prices but eventually I found that their keep cost more than I could possibly get for them, and at length, I sold the last lot at 5/- a piece. I was very thankful to find that on reporting my proceedings to Lord Panmure, he entirely approved of everything I had done, and I then asked permission to return to England. I was however, directed to remain until I received further orders.

CHAPTER VI

The Danube Commission

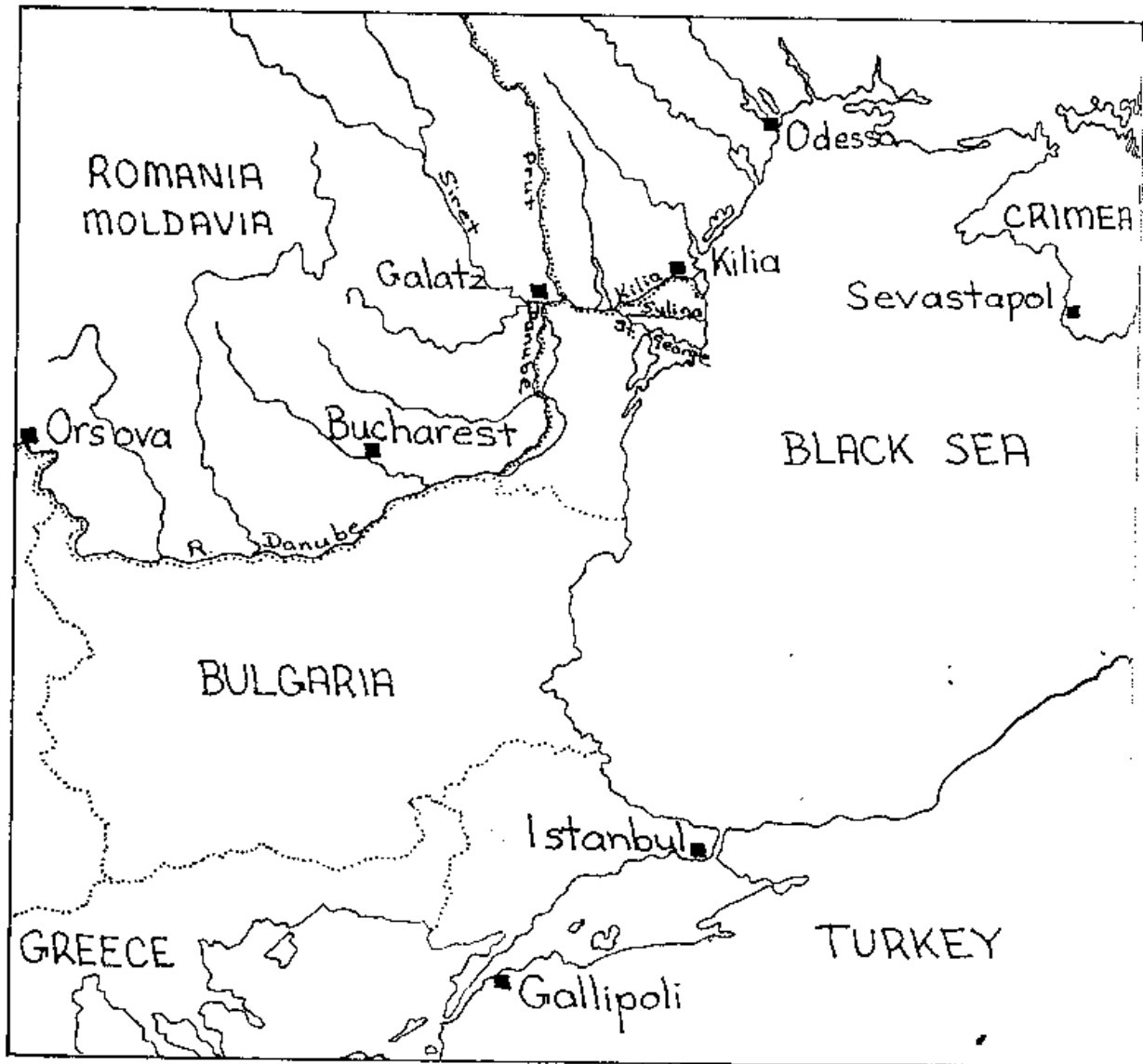
On the 20th July I was summoned to the Embassy. When I got there, the Ambassador was at dinner, and I had to wait for some time. Presently His Excellency came into the room and told me that he was directed to offer me the appointment of Her Majesty's Delegate on the European Commission appointed under the Treaty of Paris for the improvement of the Mouths of the Danube.

I looked at him in some astonishment, as I had not the very faintest notion what the Commission was or what it had to do. Lord Stratford said, looking at me in his fixed way, "You don't mean to refuse?" to which I replied that I did not know what was being offered to me. He said, "There is a copy of the Treaty of Paris; you had better look it over and let me know in the morning what your decision is." I had not of course the slightest intention of refusing, but I really did not know what lay before me.

By perusal of the Treaty I learnt that this Commission was charged, by virtue of its stipulations, to employ Engineers for the purpose of removing the sand-banks which, by the silting up due to the floods of this large river, obstructed the navigation between Isaktcha at the head of the Delta and the Black Sea. The members appointed by the seven Powers represented, were authorized to levy tolls on shipping to cover the expense of the work. I went to my friend, Colonel, - now Field-Marshal, Sir Lintorn-Simmons who agreed with me that this was a thing to accept although our examination of the Treaty showed that the post offered to me, - an-important and responsible one, - was likely to present great difficulties.

The next morning I went to the Ambassador to say that I was ready to accept the offer of H.M.'s Government. This decision, in fact, changed my whole life. The term allotted by the Treaty to the Commission was apparently for a period of two years. I remained on it for more than fifteen years, and the work is still going on! Having thus accepted the appointment I at once asked permission to return to England to make arrangements for my family to join me, but I was told that I had better remain where I was, so that I might not be absent when my colleagues should arrive. I have since found that the assembling of colleagues, especially when there are six of them, is a matter of time. The commission did not meet till the month of November, the offer came to me in July. I passed my time pleasantly enough, however, at Constantinople living principally at the Hotel Petala at Therapia, - very comfortable quarters in a lovely neighbourhood. I met with the greatest kindness from Lord Stratford de Redclyffe, and was happy in the near neighbourhood of my brother officer, E.C. Gordon and his family.

I was also fortunate in the companionship of many officers of the Navy, as the Fleet was lying on the Asiatic side of the Bosphorus. One friend I made there was the unfortunate Tryon, who was drowned in the Mediterranean in 1893, when he went down with his flag-ship the "Victoria".



Map of places mentioned by Sir John Stokes around the Black Sea and the mouth of the River Danube

Early in August Lord Lyons, who was in command, gave me a gun-boat to visit the Danube, so as to enable me to form some idea of the locality where I was to carry on my duties, and to make arrangements for my family when they should come out.

The "Wrangler" was one of the old gun-boats, commanded by Captain Marryat, (nephew of the novelist) and her first officer was Arthur Cowburn, a nephew of my old friend, Mr Masters Smith of Camer. I had a particularly nice time with these officers.

The Sulina, which is the smallest of the three main mouths, bringing to the sea but 2/27 of the water of the river, was at this time the only one used for navigation, as the depth over its bar varied from 7 to 10 feet, according to the season, while the Kilia to the north bearing 10/27, and the St George to the south, with 8/27, had a depth rarely exceeding 6 feet.

We went up the Sulina branch accordingly, and on as far as the town of Galatz, the future headquarters of the Commission. There I made the acquaintance of Mr Cunningham, H.B.M.'s Vice Consul, a very hospitable old gentleman, but of rugged exterior and of somewhat intemperate habits. On our return we went down to the St. George's branch, - a much finer one than the Sulina. I had applied to the Government for the assistance of an of finer of engineers and a small number of sappers to enable me to carry out my duties on the Danube; accordingly Corporal Isaac and two sappers, with surveying instruments had been assigned to me at Constantinople. These I had taken with me, and I left them at the mouth of the St. George with instructions to take daily observations of the winds and river currents until my return. Mr. Cunningham, who had accompanied us to the St. George's mouth, strongly recommended me to take up land for the Government in case that mouth should be selected for improvement. This I did, and instructed my sappers to erect a hut for themselves upon it.

As there was insufficient water over the bar of the St. George to allow us to proceed to sea, we returned via the St. George and Sulina branches, to the Sulina mouth, whence we crossed to Serpent's Island. There we found two or three of H.M.S. ships keeping guard, and heard of the amusing way in which the Island had been preserved to Turkey. During the war the Russian guard had been withdrawn and the light-house had remained unoccupied. The Treaty of Paris had made no special mention of the Island which lies about 20 miles off the Sulina mouth of the Danube, ceded to Turkey by the Treaty of Paris.

Captain Vansittart R.N. had been sent to Odessa to arrange with Count Strogonoff, the Governor General, for the occupation of the island by the Turks. He requested an interview, and was told that the Governor was much occupied just then, but would see him in a day or two. At the same time he perceived a small vessel in the harbour getting up

steam, and immediately guessed that this vessel was going off to take possession of Serpent's Island. So, without waiting for the interview with the Governol General, he at once weighed anchor and steamed off for the island, where he hoisted the Turkish flag. A few hours later the little steamer arrived, as he had divined, with a similar object in view. Thus by his promptitude he prevented complications which might have arisen as the Russians would probably have demanded compensation for giving it up. In consequence of this incident Lord Lyons, for a time, kept ships lying there. On my return to the Bosphorus I made my report to the Ambassador, and remained there according to his recommendation, waiting for news of my colleagues.

Before my expedition to the Danube, I had arranged with my wife that she should join me, with our children, as soon as she could break up our establishment at Gravesend and get our furniture shipped for the Danube. She and the children were to come out by steamer to Constantinople. As there was no direct steam communication between London and the Danube at that time all our things had to be sent in a sailing ship. During the two months that I passed at Constantinople I amused myself principally with cricket. Gordon and I were devoted to the game and we found several Naval men to join us. We used to play in the Sultan's valley, or wherever we could find a level piece of turf. I had unfortunately sold my horses before I knew I should have to remain in these parts, but I was fortunate enough to find two others, one of which was a beautiful lady's horse for my wife. In September I was warned of the early assembling of the Commission, and proceeded again to Galatz with my horses and servants. I took the lease of a new house that was nearly completed, - the finishing of which I could myself look after, including the addition of an external staircase - it having been forgotten!

One of my early duties was to extricate Her Majesty's Vice Consul from a very unpleasant position. It was on the occasion of the fete day of the Emperor of Austria. At this time, the Principalities, Moldavia and Wallachia, were occupied by the Austrian troops who had held them for some months, before and since the signing of the Treaty of Peace. We were invited to the banquet given by the Officer Commanding, in honour of the Emperor's birthday. When the Colonel had given the toast of the Emperor, Mr. Cunningham got up, and said that he could not agree with the Colonel that the occupation of the Principalities had been a blessing to the country. Of course, this speech by an officer representing Her Majesty at the banquet, produced the utmost confusion, and the Colonel considered that, to make such an observation, at that time and place, was an insult to his Master. I got Cunningham away as quickly as I could, and called the next day and offered apologies for what had occurred. I said it must have been evident that Mr Cunningham was not responsible for what he had said. The Colonel was most indignant, and wished to fight a duel with him, but I managed to smooth matters over, and nothing more came of it.

Early in October, I heard of the arrival of my family at Smyrna in the "Teneriffe", and I hurried down to Constantinople to meet them. I trans-shipped them into the Austrian Lloyd steamer "Schlick" and we sailed in roughish weather for the Danube. On reaching the mouth of the Sulina, there was too much sea to enter, so we had to lie there until the weather moderated. It was on this voyage that my third son, Frank, an infant in arms, had a narrow escape. His nurse was going to carry him down the companion ladder, when her foot slipped; she did her best to save the child, but they both fell to the bottom. Happily no bones were broken, though both were much frightened. After a few hours the weather moderated. We got into the Danube and arrived at Galatz, where I installed my family. I had bought a few necessary beds, tables and chairs, for use until the arrival of the vessel which carried our furniture, but this did not take place for more than two months, and the discomfort in which we passed our time can hardly be conceived. Our servants were all English and could not speak a word of the language of the country. The occupation of the Austrians made the purchase of the simplest necessities of life very difficult; in fact the Austrian troops ate up everything. The meat was so coarse that we lived upon Irish stew, with an occasional hare, and caviare. - this last was a most useful nutriment to us. Caviare is obtained from the sturgeon, a grand fish from 12 to 15 feet long, which is caught at the mouths of the Danube. Its flesh is coarse, rather like veal; but the caviare, or roe, taken out and eaten quite fresh with lemon juice, pepper and bread, is most excellent. The sturgeon is caught in this way; the fishermen stretch across the river a stout line from which are suspended, a few feet apart, short lines with large pointed hooks attached at distances of a few inches. The points where the hanging lines are attached, are marked by small buoys of reeds. As the sturgeon passes up or down the river he touches these hooks, which scratch him; he then rubs himself against them and gets entangled, and the little buoys above, which have been floating horizontally turn up vertically. The fishermen on shore, who are watching, put off in canoes and finish the fish with harpoons.

Shortly after I returned from Constantinople, my colleagues on the Danube Commission assembled, and we held our first meetings on the 4th November and the following days. We then resolved to make an inspection of the river, which it was our duty to render navigable. For this purpose we embarked on the "Albricht", a river gun-boat which was placed at our disposal by our Austrian colleagues and which had plenty of accommodation. We steamed successively down the St. George's branch, the Sulina Branch, as far as the Argagni shoal, and the Kilia branches. The weather was getting cold and rough but we were much interested in all that we saw, and began to form some idea of the magnitude and complexity of the task that lay before us.

Lying outside the mouth of the Kilia we found H.M.S. "Medina", the officers of which were employed in surveying the Kilia mouths under the direction of Capt. Spratt R.N. This vessel had been sent up from the fleet by Lord Lyons for the purpose of making surveys of the several mouths of the Danube, and Capt. Spratt had, during the autumn been making valuable surveys of the Kilia and the St. George, and these he placed at the disposal of the Commission.

One of our expeditions at the Kilia mouth was made in company with Lieut. Hamilton, commanding a gun-boat lying outside, with whom we visited the town of Kilia. It may give some idea of the intensity of the cold at that season when I say that he gave us each a glass of gin which we drank thinking it water; it was only when we got back to the warm steamer that the strength of the liquor began to make itself felt.

I have not said a word about my companions. Omar Feizy Pascha, a Turk and the President of the Commission, was a dapper little man, a General who had, however, seen but little military service; M. Englehardt, the Frenchman, was a young man of some ability, belonging to the Consular service. The Austrian, M. Becke, was a very able man, and was also Consul of his country at Galatz. We found it an advantage that he understood English, and also spoke it a little. M. Bitter, who represented Prussia, was a Civil servant of the State; a very bureaucratic, self-opinionated gentleman, hardworking and thorough in all that he did, like most Germans, but very much inclined to take the Prussian view of everything.

Baron d'Offenberg, who represented Russia, was a military man in the diplomatic service; he had been through the Crimean war, and had represented the Russian Foreign Office at the head-quarters of the Generals, Prince Menschikoff and, subsequently, Prince Gortchakoff. Sardinia was represented by the Marquis d'Aste, a captain in the Sardinian Navy, a very jolly, pleasant fellow.

CHAPTER VII

The Work of the Commission (1857 - 1860)

One of the first matters which occupied the attention of the Commission, was the obstruction existing at a shoal about 40 miles above Sulina. At this point a small stream called the Papadia left the Sulina to join the Kilia branch. This stream, together with an abnormal width at this section of the river, caused a check to the current and consequent deposit of solid matter over a large area called the Argagni. Our visit to the shoal showed us what a difficult waterway it was, as many vessels were aground.

Altogether this voyage down the different branches of the river convinced us that not only had we before us a great Engineering problem, but also that of grappling with the state of complete, and seemingly endless, confusion which prevailed in the navigation of the river.

Although my own instructions consisted only in a copy of the Treaty of Paris, without a single word of direction as to what I was to do, I found that my colleagues had, many of them, specific directions as to the part which the Commission ought to take in regulating the navigation of the river and providing for the organization of such a river police as would put a stop to the endless abuses of all kinds which we found thriving there. Five of the Commissioners, indeed were provided with regular diplomatic credentials and full powers to represent their Governments. The French Commissioner had only a letter of instructions; I not even so much as that. Our colleagues demanded that we should call upon our Governments to accredit us properly, but raised no objection to our acting as if they had already done so.

We were rather a heterogeneous body as regarded language. The Turk spoke only German, besides his own language, which none of us understood; the Prussian spoke French imperfectly; the Austrian and Russian both spoke French fluently; the Sardinian did so fairly well; the Frenchman spoke no language but his own, but could read German; I had a good grammatical knowledge of both French and German, but spoke both with difficulty and diffidence, and had no knowledge of their idioms.

The principal and most important duty of the Commission was to make a navigable channel from the sea to the deep water above the head of the Delta. The difficulty that opposed itself to this was the small depth of water on the bars at the entrances to the river and upon the different shoals, which compelled vessels to discharge their cargo into lighters whether to get into or out of the river, or to pass over these shoals. Their difficulties in this respect were innumerable. Pilots, most of them Greeks, were in league with the lightermen, also Greeks, and they combined to run vessels ashore and thus force upon the Captains the necessity of lightening at exorbitant charges. They often robbed vessels of the grain or goods lightened from them and acts of violence and piracy were

frequent. We had therefore, before us not only the question of the proper (engineering works to deepen the river, and the decision as to which mouth and branch it was the best to improve, but the equally difficult one of bringing into order this piratical population. The towns of Sulina and Tultcha, which were their headquarters, were under the lax government of Turkish officials from whom no help was to be expected. The Treaty of Paris, under which we were acting, provided that each Power might have two light vessels of war in the river, and it was to them that we looked to enable us to control this floating population. Our gun-boat, H.M.S. "Boxer", Lieutenant Patrick Townshend R.N., arrived before the winter, and enabled me personally to inspect the river a little more closely than I had done in company with my colleagues. On our return to Galatz from our inspection on the Austrian gun-boat, my colleagues requested me to obtain the services of an Englishman to act as the engineer of the Commission. My thoughts immediately turned to Capt. Hartley who had rendered such good service in the Turkish Contingent of Engineers. He was one of the four engineers to whom Lord Panmure had authorized me to give a Captain's commission. I supposed that if he were promised emoluments about equal to those which I had obtained for him on a former occasion, he would be prepared to undertake the great work which I was now able to offer him. I therefore wrote to him and to Sir John Burgoyne, the Inspector General of Fortifications, whom I requested to examine his testimonials. Hartley was at that time employed on railway work in Devonshire, where, however, he had formerly had experience of hydrotechnic work. He was pleased to undertake the duties proposed to him, and was able to satisfy Sir John Burgoyne as to his fitness for the post.

The winter was passed in frequent meetings of the Commission. Galatz had been chosen as its head-quarters, although lying beyond its scope, a hundred miles up the river. It was the nearest town with any pretensions to western civilization, Sulina being little more than a collection of mean huts, stretching between the river and the trackless swamp, while Tultcha, a Turkish town on the right bank, was hardly more practicable. We took offices and proceeded to organize our staff. The secretary General was a Frenchman, M. Mohler; a German, Herr Ruthling, was the head of our Cash Office; a German colonel, Malinofski by name, in the Turkish service, was placed in charge of an establishment at Tulcha for obtaining supplies of timber and stone; and several other employees were engaged.

Our finances were not in a very satisfactory state, as they depended on the supplies of money which the Turkish Government had engaged to furnish for the work. At first, however, the money was forthcoming with sufficient regularity, and we were able to make all these preliminary arrangements.

My own home life, as has been described before, was pretty rough. We were in much anxiety as to the arrival of the "Hussar", and having seen

the river, I could not help feeling doubtful about her getting over the Sulina bar, although our furniture did not constitute a very heavy load; otherwise she was in ballast. It was, of course, of great importance to me to secure her getting up before the river froze, and as soon as I heard of her arrival at Sulina my Austrian colleague very kindly placed at my disposal, to tow her up the river, the gun-boat in which we had made our tour of inspection. Happily, in this manner, we secured her arrival before Christmas.

We set ourselves to work to get everything in order and very shortly after we were installed, Edith was born. We, happily, had a very excellent doctor at Galatz, Doctor Serfioti, a Greek, who had been educated at Vienna, and who was our constant friend and medical adviser during the years we lived at Galatz. A proper nurse was also obtainable so that the dear Mother and child had every care and attention and everything went well.

Towards the end of February, Hartley arrived, bringing with him two surveyors, whom we had authorized him to engage. They had had several adventures on the way, the principal of which was that, H.M.S. "Sphynx", in which Lord Lyons had kindly given them a passage from Constantinople to Sulina, on arrival at that place found that the navigation had been stopped by the ice, and it was necessary for them to go on to Odessa and travel from thence overland to Galatz, a journey which, in those days was a matter of considerable difficulty and some danger. However they arrived safely, and were very welcome. One of the surveyors, Mr. Hansford, proved a most valuable acquisition to the Commission, for he was an accurate and trustworthy surveyor of waterways. His companion Mr. Mein, was as inefficient, however, as Mr Hansford was excellent, and we very soon had to get rid of him. Hartley met with a cordial greeting from my colleagues, and was installed as the Engineer-in-Chief of the Commission. As soon as the river navigation began, he repaired to Sulina with his assistants in order to begin the study of the engineering problem before us. I ~also in company with Baron D'Offenberg, went down to Tultcha, where Colonel Malinovski had been placed in charge of our depots.

We made our way back by land on the right bank of the river by Isaktcha and so on. It was a very interesting ride, and I was particularly pleased with the vegetation and to see crocuses growing wild in this far distant land, which reminded me of the dear old country at home.

The duties of the Commission consisted of frequent meetings for the purpose of discussing reports upon the navigation which we received from different agents, in endeavouring, by temporary works, to improve certain portions of the Sulina branch, especially the Argagni shoal, and in drawing up regulations by which we endeavoured to bring vessels navigating the river, the pilots, the lighters and so on, under control.

During the spring our hands were strengthened by the arrival of some of the gun-boats which the Governments were entitled to send up. H.M.S. "Weser" under the command of Capt. Wise, was one of these. A French gun-boat had arrived before Christmas, and the Austrian boat had been there ever since the occupation. In Capt. Wise I found a very charming companion and friend, and a valuable ally in carrying out any measures that we asked him to undertake.

During the early summer of 1857, I had the advantage of seeing Sir Henry Bulwer, then on his way to Bucharest to take up his duties as Commissioner for the organization of the Principalities; and from him, an old Ambassador, and experienced diplomatist, I received many very valuable hints as to my transaction of business with the Foreign Office. I had, of course, from the moment of taking up duties on the European Commission of the Danube, to report direct to the Foreign Office, sending copies of all my despatches, as well as independent reports, to, H.M.'s Ambassador at Constantinople, Lord Stratford de Redcliffe.

One of the matters on which I consulted Sir Henry Bulwer, was that of my pay, as I had received no intimation of the salary which was to be attached to my appointment, although I had authority to draw upon the Foreign office for any money I wanted for my expenses. It was on this point especially, that his advice was useful - that is, as to the manner in which I should account for the monies I had thus drawn, and the vouchers I should furnish in support of my expenditure. The position was one of great independence, for I was virtually acting on my own unaided responsibility. I absolutely did not receive from the Government at home any instructions for many months after I had taken up the work. My only guide was a copy of the Treaty, which simply defined the character of the duties, but, without indicating the manner in which they were to be performed. I had written constantly and fully upon every matter that came under the consideration of the Commission, but up to that time, that is six months after joining my colleagues, I had no answer from the Foreign office to any despatch, and I was naturally anxious on the subject. I had, however, the comfort of knowing that Lord Stratford approved of all that I had done, and from him I got a despatch from time to time; but I was not supposed to receive instructions from him.

During this year of 1857, I had much intimate intercourse with Hartley, who was busily engaged in making surveys of the Danube, and taking the measurement of the volume of water in the main river and in its branches; in gauging the strength of its currents, studying all its climatic conditions, and endeavouring to ascertain which would be the best mouth to deepen for navigation and what would be the best class of works for the purpose.

The Commission had also engaged a Prussian engineer, M. Richrath, to assist Hartley in carrying out the works. The Prussian Commissioner had also requested his Government to send an engineer of distinction to

advise him personally on matters of a technical nature. M. Nobiling, arrived early in the spring, and proved a thorn in the sides of Hartley and myself, for he was a gentleman of cut and dried notions, who immediately, without any sufficient data, framed projects for the different engineering works, which he declared to be necessary for the improvement of the Danube. Hartley, on the contrary, declined to make any project until he had satisfied himself as to the general conditions and the correctness of the surveys of the river. The nautical surveys made by Capt. Spratt, though excellent for navigating purposes, were not of sufficient accuracy to enable an engineer to base his calculations of quantities upon them. Hartley therefore insisted upon having Mr. Hansford's soundings of the mouths of the river before he would undertake to make any proposals. Of course M. Nobiling's reports and plans appeared very enticing to the untechnical gentleman who knew nothing at all about engineering, and who had to decide upon these great questions. The result was that some of the Commissioners reported to their Governments that unnecessary delays were being made by myself and Hartley in issuing the report upon our work.

I ought to say here, that the Treaty of Paris, while creating the European Commission of the Danube for dealing with the delta, had also instituted a Riverine Commission, whose duties were to control and improve the river above that point. The Treaty of Paris had supposed that the European Commission would finish its task in two years, when it was to hand the work over to the Riverine Commission. This supposition was founded on the reports which Mr. Cunningham, the British Consul at Galatz had made to our Foreign Office during the years previous to the war.

He had maintained that the difficulties at the mouth of the river (the only navigable one - the Sulina mouth) were due to the malign influence of Russia, which was then in possession of the Danube mouths, and to that Power having neglected to dredge the Sulina, which in former years, in the time of the Turks, had, he asserted been kept open by the simple expedient of making each vessel that went out, tow a heavy iron harrow behind it, which stirred up the muddy deposits and deepened the channel. The legend on which this was based entirely omitted to say how the harrow got back again into the port! The idea, therefore, prevailing at Paris when the Treaty was signed, was that some simple combination of dredging and harrow-towing would open the river, and that all could be arranged in a couple of years. When engineers on the spot took the question in hand, they soon found the fallacy of these suppositions. In fact we did give a trial to the system by towing the harrow that we found at Sulina backwards and forwards over the bar, but we found that, although the channel might be deepened by a few inches in the course of several weeks towing, it was constantly filled in again by the wash of the sea and that this method could never have exercised any real influence on the state of the river. Dredging was also tried with equally ineffectual results, and it became evident to us that the only method of improving the

river was by works which would require several years and much money for their construction. We would not therefore undertake any works or make any proposals, until we had the proper data, and, as I have said, we were obtaining these as quickly as possible, and were determined not to accept hastily drawn projects put forward by this Prussian engineer.

During the summer of 1857 therefore, I received more than one enquiry from home as to when Hartley's reports would be sent in, and had to write very strongly on the subject.

I am glad to say that when the Foreign Office referred the matter to Sir John Burgoyne, who was at the head of the Royal Engineers, he entirely agreed that we ought not to be hurried in the matter. Still, there was a constant pressure by the other Commissioners upon Hartley for his report, and it cost me a great deal of worry and anxiety, which ended in my getting an attack of Danube fever some time about the month of September. My doctor recommended me to get away from Galatz and to go to the Convent of Adam, some 50 or 60 miles up country, so I drove with my wife and children, and the fresh air of the country had such a revivifying effect upon me that, although I was carried down to the carriage in the morning by the middle of the day I was able to get up and drive myself. A stay of a week at the Convent, where we were most hospitably received, quite restored me to health. The Lady Superior was Madame Stourdza, a member of one of the best families of Moldavia, a very kind old lady, who always received us most cordially on our visits to Adam. The life in this convent was of a very different nature from that which in the West we are in the habit of associating with an institution of the kind. It was not a gloomy building within the four walls of which the nuns were immured, but more resembled a village of neat little cottages in pleasant gardens. In each of these, two nuns lived. The Lady Superior had a very good house and garden of her own and a little chapel. There were Stranger's apartments in which any traveller who presented himself was entertained gratuitously for three days, and then sent on his way rejoicing. We were put up by the Lady Superior herself, and in subsequent years when I sent my children with their Governess and servants to the Convent, we used to hire one or two of the nuns' cottages, which were then, with their gardens, given up entirely to them. The convent was in a charming country, prettily wooded, with fields of corn all round and pure breezes blowing, which made life there most agreeable.

On my return to Galatz I found that nothing of importance had occurred, and by October Hartley had got together sufficient data to enable him to make his report to the Commission. This report was most complete and clear, comparing very favourably in its conciseness with the long-winded productions of Mr. Nobiling. One great disadvantage under which Hartley then laboured was that he knew little of French, and that his report had to be translated into that language. I applied myself to this matter, but no doubt the result was most puzzling even to Frenchmen, as

I had not then acquired the facility of writing French which long experience has since given me. It was an immense advantage, therefore, that Mr. Becke, the Austrian was able to read the report in English, and from him we had the very warmest support in favour of Hartley's conclusions.

These were in favour of opening the St. George's mouth of the river; - conclusions at which Hartley had arrived after long and constant discussions with myself. In fact throughout the whole of our connection there, he and I were constantly in touch, and I found him most willing to submit first to my judgment the proposals which from time to time he brought before the Commission. I need hardly say that he received from me the steadfast and warm support to which his genius and energy entitled him.

Our discussions of this Report naturally lasted for a very long period, extending from December 1857 to April 1858. The Commissioners were divided. The Austrian, Sardinian and Turkish Commissioners, with myself, were strongly in favour of opening the St. George's branch, the French and Prussian Commissioners being in favour of the Sulina, and the Russian, whilst preferring the Kilia, would rather open the Sulina than the St. George's. It meant this, that the Russian and his supporters of Prussia and France, wished that the mouth nearest to the Russian frontier should be opened, with a view to its control by Russia. As I was the only technical member of the European Commission the issue of this division of opinion was the appointment of a Technical Commission that was assembled at Paris to decide upon our reports and on the various reports of Hartley, M. Nobiling, and M. Richrath, which had been laid before us, and sent to the several Governments.

This Technical Commission was composed of Capt. Fowke. of the R.E., Col. Menabrea of Sardinia, a distinguished engineer, M. Postaip a French engineer, and M. Leutze of the Prussian Public Works. In April 1858 the European Commission recognized that, whatever mouth might be eventually chosen for permanent improvement, something must be done at once temporarily for the Sulina, and Hartley was directed to submit a project for that purpose.

In his proposal for the permanent improvement of the river he had suggested works which should be applied at the Sulina mouth on the same principle as those he had recommended for the St. George's, namely, the projection of piers over the bar which would carry the river current across it into deep water, so that the force of the current, contracted between the piers, would sweep away the bar, and maintain a deep channel. He now proposed works in the same direction but constructed in a temporary manner. The piers were to be a combination of timber piling and heavy timber cribs, which were to be sunk and filled with stone on the line of the piers. The first project for these provisional works contemplated an expenditure of only £40,000.

Our examination of all these questions had of course led to the consideration of the resources of the country in timber and stone, as the materials for the work. At Toultscha there were large quarries of Grauwacke, a stone which could be turned out in blocks which, thrown down pen melt, were fairly well adapted for the protection of the root end of the piles. The neighbouring woods of the Dobrudsha, an extensive forest, stretching almost continuously from Isaktcha to Baba Dag, supplied very good oak timber, and hornbeam, with some limes, but none of these trees would provide piles of sufficient length and scantling for the contemplated piers. The hornbeam supplied the largest piles, but that was a wood which *teredo navalis* soon attacked, and which consequently lasted but a short time. We therefore undertook an expedition into the Carpathians to ascertain what we could obtain in those forests. Our party consisted of the Austrian Commissioner, Hartley, my secretary, Mr. Standen and myself, together with M. Genin, a Frenchman, who acted as interpreter. This journey was, as an expedition, full of interest giving us a view of the beautiful and little explored mountain regions of Upper Moldavia but was less successful than we could have wished in its immediate object. The pine trees of the Carpathians furnished magnificent masts, but the wood, though useful for many purposes in our work, was too soft and porous to be well suited for piles, and, in the end, our wants in this respect were supplied mostly from the forests of the Save valley.

On our return, Hartley set to work to repair damage caused by the weather to the north pier at Sulina, and shortly floated out and sank a new crib, which, however, was soon swept away by a storm. He came then to the conclusion that it was better to trust to only piling, and thenceforward made rapid progress with the pier on this system.

During the summer, acting on the advice of Capt. Fowke, our Government twice telegraphed directing me to discontinue the works, but I evaded compliance, on the ground that having formally assented to the project approved by my colleagues I could not draw back.

Soon after Easter 1858, Sir Henry Bulwer, having been appointed Ambassador at Constantinople, the Government decided to give a certain eclat to his departure from Bucharest by sending H.M.S. "Weser" up the river to receive him. Capt. Wise proposed to me and my wife that we should accompany him and pay our first visit to Bucharest. This we gladly did, and were very kindly entertained by the Consul General, Mr. Buchanan, who gave us a cordial reception and introduced us to Wallachian society.

On the first night of our arrival, we went to a grand ball at the house of a Mr. and Madame Otiteliceano. The history of these people was very typical of Roumanian society. Mr Otiteliceano was a great gambler, he had made an immense fortune in this way and had built a palace. The general company assembled in magnificent salons, but on the upper floor

there was a regular "hell" where gambling of the most reckless description was going on. Madame Oteticeano was a charming lady who received her guests with great distinction; we were told that she was the second wife. Mr. O. in his days of poverty had married a woman of his own class, who knew nothing about society or receptions, and when he became wealthy, this good woman said "My dear, I am not fit to take the lead in society to which your fortune and your grand palace entitle you. Divorce me and marry a young and pretty woman, who will do the honours of your house properly. You can get me a small house near at hand, and when you are sick, I will nurse you. And this she eventually did, for, before I left the Danube, I heard that he had lost all his money, and that this poor woman literally did nurse him on his death-bed: - this woman who had sacrificed herself to his ambition.

We did not make a very long stay at Bucharest, for Sir Henry Bulwer was about to leave for England. He made his formal departure in the man-of-war, but as he knew well that he could not trust to her to take him up the river with speed and safety to join the railway at Baziasch, as there was not water enough over the Iron Gates to admit of her passing, he therefore arranged to ascend the river in her for a few miles only, until overtaken by the Austrian mail boat which he would then join. As the river was then in flood Capt. Wise thought that he might get up as far as Turnu Severin, whence he proposed that we should make an expedition into the Carpathians. As our presence on board the "Weser" while she conveyed Sir Henry would not have been correct, we decided to leave Giurgevo by the mail steamer. We had an adventurous drive from Bucharest by night. It was very dark and the driver lost his way; it was amusing to see him walking about, lighting lucifers to try and regain the track. He eventually succeeded, and we reached Giurgevo in time to join the mail steamer. In due course we overtook the "Weser", and changed places with Sir Henry who continued his journey less ceremonially by mail boat.

The town of Turnu Severin is interesting from the fact that at this point, one of Trajan's bridges crossed the Danube. We found the old piers of the bridge, a bridge built, not, as might be supposed, of hewn stone, but of layers of large bricks and rubble, laid in the splendid cement for which the Romans were famous, and which has stood the destructive effects of the floods for all these centuries. We made our way to Orsova on the Austro-Turkish frontier and from thence a drive of some ten miles up the lovely valley of Czerna brought us to the famous Herkules Bad of Mehadia. We had heard much of the beauty of this Carpathian gorge, and in this we were not disappointed, but in the matter of accommodation we found that we had reckoned without our host. The season had not begun, and we arrived at night to find all the hotels closed. We had great difficulty in gaining admittance to one of them, after much persuasion, and had but a miserable entertainment. In after years we became familiar with this beautiful place under pleasanter conditions.

Returning, we made a detour through the mountains, so as to traverse the beautiful pass of the Kazan. This journey was interesting and full of adventures. In this wild mountain country accommodation for travellers scarcely existed; the few people we saw were civil enough, but communication with them was most difficult. They were more familiar with Roumanian or Hungarian than with German, which last I spoke indifferently and my companions not at all. We struck the Danube as we intended some miles above Orsova, and there found a splendid road running along the river bank. This road, constructed by Count Secheny, is in many places blasted out of the rock which rises sheer from the water. On the opposite bank we could see traces of the road made by Trajan. Here holes had been made in the face of the rock to receive cross bars and struts on which they built a timber track. On the Secheny road similar positions, passed by blasting, had a solid floor of rock. At length we joined the "Weser", and began our downward voyage, which proved of a rather critical character, as the floods had fallen and we were much afraid of becoming

stranded on one of the river banks; we had however a good pilot on board and, getting safely down to Giurgevo, we reached Galatz without further adventure.

We heard during this summer that the Technical Commission assembled at Paris, was fully discussing the question of the Danube works, and in the autumn I received from the Government a copy of their report. This supported the majority of our Commissioners in the choice of the St. George's branch for permanent improvement but made a recommendation of a system which appeared to me and to Hartley to be inadequate and almost certain to fail in its object. This consisted in a proposal that a lateral canal should be dredged from a point in the St. George above the bar, and led so far out into the sea that deposits from the river would not be likely to choke it. The upper end of this canal was to be shut off from the river, and entered by gates closing over a sill only 16 ft. below the level of the sea. We considered that this entrance would become speedily choked by the deposits from the river, and that even if the system should prove successful, no vessel drawing more than 36 ft. of water could ever enter. The Technical Commission cited in support of their recommendation the works at the mouth of the Vistula, and at the mouths of the Elbe, the Rhone, and the Ebre. I therefore applied to the Foreign Office, of which the Earl of Malmesbury was the head, as Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, for permission to go home and lay before him the objections to the scheme, visiting the Vistula and the Elbe on the way. I received permission to do this early in December and the navigation of the river being now closed, I had to make my journey in a post-waggon from Galatz, by Transylvania and Hungary to Vienna. This journey was an interesting and adventurous one. The post-waggon in which I got a seat took the road by Tekutch and Roman, by which we had travelled in our expedition to the Carpathians in the summer, but the roads were in such a deplorable condition, that I

was 16 hours in reaching Tekutch, which I had done in 6 on the previous occasion. Our waggon was drawn by eight horses, but we had to put in sixteen to get up the hill near the Sereth. My companions were the Courier in charge of the mail, and a Moldavian soldier, the guard. I carried my own provisions but was not prepared with sufficient warm clothing for such a journey at that time of year. Between the upper part of the Moldavia and the first post in Austrian territory, we had to traverse a bit of Wallachia. After leaving the last post-house in Moldavia I became suddenly aware, about ten o'clock at night, on awaking from a sound sleep, that we were standing still, and on looking out, I found there was a dense fog, that neither driver nor horses were to be seen, and that we were planted in a marsh. There was nothing for it under the circumstances, but to try to get to sleep again and keep as warm as one could, but the cold and fog, penetrated to one's bones. At daylight I roused my companions and there still being no driver or horses, I suggested that he should send back the soldier to the guardhouse to make them bring the horses up again, for, evidently the men had lost their road in the night, and as the heavy waggon got stuck in the marsh, they had left us to our fate, and gone to the warmth of the posting station, some miles back. Eight o'clock arrived! nine o'clock! and no sign of the horses. At last I suggested to my companion, the Courier, that he should go back and hurry them on. "Sir" he said "I have 5,000 ducats in that case". "Well" I replied "you know who I am. I am not likely to run away with them, I will take care of them until you return." Accordingly he went and at last, between ten and eleven o'clock, came back with the horses and we started again. I shall never forget the journey thence into Austrian territory. The road was no road at all; it passed over rough water-courses, and huge boulders, and the men galloped so heedlessly that my head struck frequently against the roof of the waggon, as we pitched about in every direction. At last, after some two hours, we reached the Austrian frontier and there we had a pleasant change. From the frontier there are military roads which are kept in perfect condition. We had of course to pass through the ordeal of the Austrian Custom-House. They opened everything we had, and excited my wrath at the way in which they pulled the things out of my bags. We however, got away at last, and in due time arrived at the pretty little town of Kronstadt, in Transylvania. I was glad enough of a rest at this place for a few hours. It was Sunday so I went to the Schwarze Kirche the "Saxon" Protestant Church, and as I was returning, witnessed a most interesting procession. Coming towards me, I saw some waggons drawn by white oxen, decorated with flowers and surrounded by crowds of people, bearing to the Church, the bells to be hung there. On enquiry, I found that just ten years before, the bells had been melted down, by the Hungarian Revolutionists, and made into cannon. Permission had lately been obtained from the Austrian Government to resmelt these cannon, and cast them again as bells, and these were now with great triumph and ceremony, being escorted back to the Church.

At Kronstadt I became a little uneasy as to whether I had money enough to reach Vienna, so I went to a man in business at that place and asked him, after showing him my passport, if he would allow me to draw on our Consul General at Vienne for £20. To my astonishment, without any other guarantee, he furnished me with the money I wanted. I took the whole inside of the diligence from Kronstadt to Hermanstadt, and started, towards the evening of that day, on my dreary journey across the Hungarian plains. It was a bitterly cold night, and at one of the halting places, I heard an altercation going on with a woman who wanted a place in the inside. The guard said "No, you cannot have a place inside, it is engaged by the gentleman who is in it". I thought it would be a very selfish thing to shut out a poor woman who wanted a place and make her drive outside on such a night, but she proved to be a most disagreeable companion, a horrid old woman, who spat in every direction and made my life a burden to me. I vowed I would never be so soft-hearted again. However all things come to an end, and we arrived at length, at Hermanstadt.

This town is beautifully laid out and is largely inhabited by the descendants of the Saxon immigrants who settled there some seven or eight hundred years before. The fresh pretty-looking girls, walking about in all directions, were a pleasing contrast to the Easterns of whom I had seen so much for the previous two years: the place made a very favourable impression upon me.

At Hermanstadt I found that the quickest route to the railway, was to take a diligence to Arad, and that place I reached without much further trouble. It interested me as being one of the fortresses which played a part in the recent revolutionary wars in AustriaHungary. I had a very slow journey from Arad to Vienna. At the latter place I called upon Lord Augustus Loftus, H.M. Ambassador to the Emperor Francis Joseph, and had a very kind reception from him. I stayed there a day or two, getting any particulars I could about the Danube, and thence proceeding to Berlin, where Lord Bloomfield was Ambassador. I had met him in former years at the house of his Father, Lord Bloomfield, who was the General at Woolwich whilst I was a cadet there, and at whose hands I received my sword. He was most kind and helpful to me in the inquiries upon which I was engaged, took me to the of fine of Works of the Prussian Government, and got me orders to view all the works at the mouths of the Vistula and Elbe. What was of even greater value, he procured for me tracings of all the plans of these works which had been taken at intervals for more than a hundred years, and which showed the whole history of the opening of those two rivers. The importance of those plans to me was, that they proved that the technical Commission at Paris had made a great mistake in citing the opening of the Vistula and Elbe to navigation as examples justifying their recommendations for the mouth of the Danube. The conditions which had led to the success of the works on both rivers, - more especially the Vistula, - were entirely different from those which we had to consider. In the case of the Vistula the

success had been due to a freak of nature of a very curious character. The Vistula debouches in the Gulf of Dantzig, which is formed by the projection of a long spur, called the Helas, which protects the Gulf from the north winds as by a natural breakwater. This Helas also guides the strong littoral current up the Baltic till it strikes the opposite shore, and doubles back into the Gulf, flowing with force from east to west across the mouth of the river. In former days, and within about a quarter of a century of the time when I visited it, the Vistula, flowing down from the Carpathians, approached the Gulf in a direction perpendicular to the shore; but within a few hundred yards of it, turned abruptly to the west, and ran along parallel to the shore to the town of Dantzig where it entered the Gulf at an angle. Since the middle of the 18th century repeated attempts have been made, by projecting piers into the sea, to obtain navigable depth. These efforts, as shown by the series of plans which I had received at Berlin, had never obtained more than a partial and temporary success. In the year 1840, owing to an extraordinary block of ice, at the angle, the water forced a way through the sand dunes to the sea, and made an entirely new channel at the spot where one would naturally expect the river to debouch.

The Prussian Engineers, with great promptitude and good judgment, immediately replaced this block of ice by a dam through which river craft from Dantzig could pass by means of gates. The scour of the river being now carried out to sea by the new mouth, it was easy to control the out-flow at Dantzig, and the endeavour to deepen the entrance to the harbour by means of piers, which had failed hitherto, became a success. But it was a fallacy to suppose that, because in this case vessels could enter through a lateral canal, a similar success would attend the creation of such a canal at the mouth of the Danube. It is true that, owing to this freak of nature, the old mouth of the Vistula became so far removed from the deposits of the river that it was possible to carry out works which had a fair amount of success in making a channel into the harbour of Dantzig; but the vessels that entered there could not ascend the Vistula. Only vessels of very small tonnage and draught could pass through these gates to get into the principal river.

I found Dantzig a curious, old-fashioned German town, with a comfortable inn. I stayed there for a day or two, examining the plans and inspecting the works, but my case was already made. I thence proceeded to the mouth of the Elbe, and there found that, in the same way as at the mouth of the Vistula, the success attendant upon what was called a lateral canal was due entirely to the natural circumstances of the river. As a matter of fact this passes through a large lake, called the Haff, whence it issues again into the sea. At this point a pier had been constructed, and vessels of considerable draught were able to pass in and out. But the maintenance of that passage was due, not to any lateral canal, but to the fact that in certain conjunctions of high tide and strong wind an immense volume of water was forced from the sea into the Haff and found its way back again through the channel under the guiding pier. This led to such a

scouring away of the sand that the channel was maintained at a very fair depth, and, as this process was repeated two or three times a year, the case was certainly one of improvement, but was in no way applicable to the Danube where there was no Haff. The Rhone was cited by the Paris Commission, not so much with regard to the efficiency of the lateral canal, as to show the failure of piers such as we were making at Sulina. But I was able to prove that the works at the mouth of the Rhone failed because the prevailing winds blew straight into the channel between the piers, checking the river flood and depositing the matter in suspension. The case of the Danube was different, as the current and wind crossed the mouth of our piers and kept it open. With regard to the Elbe, I ascertained that the lateral canal was on a small scale, and far from a success, so that there was, in this case no justification for our adopting the system. I arrived in England on Christmas Day, 1858, with a body of evidence in my possession which, as I thought, most triumphantly proved the strength of my objections to the recommendations of the Paris Commission. I crossed from Calais to Dover, and had the steamer all to myself.

Arriving in London I went to my father in law's Mr Maynard's house in Cleveland Square which I found almost as empty as the boat had been. They had all gone elsewhere for their Christmas party, but I was so buoyed up with the success of my journey that I felt my disappointment the less. My first visit the next day was to the Foreign Office, but at this season it was difficult to see the authorities, but I had time therefore to go to Cobham to visit my dear Father and Mother and from thence to Ashridge to see my brother Edward who was staying there. Lady Marion Alford gave me a warm welcome, and I stayed the night there.

When at last I had an interview with Lord Malmesbury he received me very graciously and seemed greatly impressed with the result of my inquiries. He was disposed to grant my request that I should be sent to Paris, Berlin and Turin, to endeavour to confirm my theory that the report of the Technical Commission was based on erroneous information.

I had an interview with Capt. Fowke, and was rather surprised to find him offering as (disingenuous defence of the Commission, the fact that, for his part, he had not based his recommendations on the examples which I had been criticizing, but that it was his opinion independently that a lateral canal was the proper system by which to open such a river as the Danube.

On the 1st of January, 1859 the Emperor Napoleon made his famous speech to Count Hubner, the Austrian Ambassador, which foreshadowed the coming war between France and Austria in Italy. This upset the chances of international agreement upon any subject at that time. Lord Malmesbury sent for me, and said that, he could not now enter into my suggestion that I should endeavour to upset the-agreement which had been come to between the Powers. I had better return to my post and

abide by my instructions As I considered that it would be fatal to the improvement of the river to carry out these instructions, I begged for permission to continue the provisional works at Sulina, to carry them to their proper termination, and to leave the other question in suspense until our experience should show the best system. I asked to be allowed to put forward officially my strong objections to the inconclusive evidence given by the Technical Commission. Lord Malmesbury allowed me to do this, and also to remain in England until there was greater convenience for travelling, so that I need not return to Galatz by the difficult overland journey by which I had come. This gave me a happy time at home, and I was able to see something of my father, - a happy circumstance, for we were never to meet again as he died that year.

I also attended the wedding of a very dear friend, Miss Collinson, who married Mr. Tom Harrison, one of the foremost Civil Engineers, whom I had consulted on the Danube works on my arrival.

My dear Father, who was now in his 85th year, was as bright and affectionate as ever, but his physical powers were much weakened. His daily walk was now but for a few hundred yards. My little sister had grown up to be a dear girl, and the joy of the house. My Mother though ageing somewhat, was still active and hearty. I had the pleasure of meeting some very old friends, as well as of making new ones.

This was my first opportunity of personal intercourse with the Foreign office and I was not very favourably impressed by the Staff. They seemed to know very little about my work, and to be apprehensive of committing the Government to any expenditure in aid of it, altho' it was likely to prove of such importance to the trade of the country. Mr Hammond, the Under Secretary of State, was a testy old gentleman who evidently failed to appreciate the difficulties with which I had to deal, and the senior clerks were elderly men who had no experience of the kind of work upon which I was engaged. I was, however, able to arrange one point to my satisfaction, and that was, that I should receive a salary in lieu of my military pay, in addition to the expenses which I was able to charge. This salary was fixed at £500 a year.

I had one great disappointment while I was at home. My dear brother's wedding with Miss Helen Gaisford had been fixed for the 8th of February, to take place at Wells, in Somersetshire. I had asked for an interview with Lord Malmesbury, to which I attached considerable importance, and he happened to fix this very day. My vexation can be imagined when, after having waited for hours, I was not after all able to see the Minister. However, before leaving England, I had the satisfaction of seeing the newly wedded pair.

One unhappy event occurred while I was in England, I received a telegram from my wife telling me of the sudden death of Capt. Wise R.N. of the "Weser", which sad news I had to impart to his Mother. It was a

great loss to me, on my return to the Danube, not to have this friend at my side in my difficulties with the river population of the Sulina. He was succeeded in the command of the "Weser" by Capt. Johnstone, who was a worthy good fellow, but hardly so much of a companion as poor Wise had been.

I got back to Galatz early in March. During the winter months the actual work in the river was always at a stand-still; the ice formed, as a rule, early in January, and, attaining a thickness of several feet remained till, in the spring, the melting snows of the mountains brought down floods causing a debacle in which the ice disappeared with wonderful quickness, setting free the frozen-in vessels and restoring the river, after a little time, to its normal condition. Two of my colleagues, Bitter and Englehardt, accompanied by Hartley, had followed my footsteps in visiting and inspecting the Vistula; they returned very shortly to the scene of our duties, and the works were resumed as soon as the state of the river permitted, and went on developing through the year 1859.

In August, 1858 another daughter had been born whom we named Alice. Her health from the first caused us some anxiety. In the summer of 1859 I sent all my children with their Governess up to the Convent at Adam, and there the poor little child died of meningitis, the day after she was a year old.

One evening during that summer three young noblemen (English) arrived, having lost the tutor with whom they were travelling. They were the Marquis of Tullibardine, now Duke of Athol, the Marquis of Hastings and Lord Maidstone. Their tutor who had left them at Kustendjeh to take a run to Odessa, was to meet them at Galatz. This he failed to do, having as it afterwards transpired met with difficulties and obstructions from the Russian authorities on account of his Anglican Orders. I put them up for a few days, and then the two latter went on to Pesth, but young Tullibardine was short of cash and decided to remain with me till he should hear of the tutor. He was a pleasant youngster and became a great favourite on board the gun-boat. Eventually he received news of his tutor, and I lent him money to get on. I have never met him since.

In the early summer of this year my wife went to England, and I made an excursion up to Vienna and thence into the mountains, visiting Gmunden, Ischel and Salzburg, making my way to Paris where she met me on her return journey. After spending a few days there in sight-seeing we made our way, via Cologne, to Dresden.

We had registered our luggage for that place, but, unfortunately did not observe the warning at the back of the ticket that we must pass it through the Custom-House at Cologne; we went away gaily to visit some friends and see the beautiful Cathedral. On arriving at Dresden we were told that our luggage had not arrived, and that we ought to have seen to it at Cologne. We had nothing with us except one little hand-bag. The three

days that we spent in Dresden were occupied in sight-seeing, and, although we much enjoyed the glimpses of the Museum, the beautiful picture gallery and the lovely scenery, the delights of Dresden were naturally interfered with by the fact that we were constantly worrying to get our baggage, which we feared might arrive too late, as we had to catch the Danube boat. Happily it did at last arrive, and we just caught the train at Vienna which took us down to join the boat at Baziasch. Had we missed it, we should have had to wait a whole week.

The principal matters which occupied the attention of the Commission this year, in addition to continuing the work, were the rules which we passed for various branches of the navigation, such as regulations for the pilots, lighters and so on, and the condition of our finances. The Sublime Porte, which had begun by claiming the right to furnish funds for our works, and which had repudiated all offers of assistance from Austria, was beginning to feel the pinch of its resources and was very backward in sending us remittances. The result was that the works were frequently brought nearly to a standstill. Under these circumstances the Branch of the Ottoman Bank at Galatz, the directors of which were English, advanced the necessary funds in 1860 to enable the Commission to complete the provisional works, to the extent of £30,000, on security of dues to be raised on shipping. The terms were onerous, 12 per cent, per annum, and a commission of one per cent on the loan; but without this money we must have discontinued the works just as success was within reach.

The year 1859 terminated in a sad loss to me, as I heard of my dear Father's death, on the 23rd December, just two months before completing his 86th year. Consequently our Carnival in January, 1860 was passed in seclusion, and we took part in none of the gaieties of the place.

CHAPTER VIII

The Danube (1860 - 1865)

In March 1860 we had the happiness of realizing the first effects of our works at the mouth of the Sulina. The entrance to the river deepened, under the influence of the floods, to 16 feet. This appeared to us, to justify the imposition of the tariff of dues which we were authorized to levy, as already vessels had benefited by the works which we had carried out, in being able to enter the river without lightening and to leave it with only partial lightening.

Hartley, who was at that time in Egypt, received with great delight our news of the effect which his work had produced, but, alas, that effect was not to last long, for when further high floods came down a great deposit was precipitated and the depth was again reduced to 13 feet.

It became evident that the effect of the one pier which alone at that time had been constructed, was not sufficient to secure an improved entrance. This experience was interesting, because an Austrian Engineer, Mr. Wex, had maintained that one pier was quite sufficient. As soon as Hartley returned he began the second or South pier, which had always been part of his project. Great progress was made in 1860 in carrying the North pier to its length of 1800 metres, in leading out the South pier and in securing its parallelism of the extremities at 600 feet apart. During the summer of 1860 the Commission discussed the principles on which the tariff should be fixed, with the result that it was constructed on a double sliding scale, varying according to the size of the vessels and the depth of the entrance. Vessels were classified according to their draught of water as represented by their tonnage, and each class was taxed according to the depth of water at the entrance. The greater the depth, the more a vessel paid, but vessels of small tonnage did not pay higher rates for depths beyond their average draught. This tariff was agreed to by the Commission on July 5th, 1860, to be put into force from the 1st September of that year. It had been worked out principally by the Russian Commissioner, Baron d'Offenberg, and myself, that is, I adopted some of his suggestions in modification of my proposals and worked out all the detailed rates, a problem which it required some patience and ingenuity to solve. Very soon after putting the tariff in force the Commission became aware of the fact that the levying of the tolls on vessels of different nations according to their tonnage did not carry out the express stipulation in the Treaty of Paris that the flags of all nations should be treated on a footing of perfect equality; for it soon came to our knowledge that hardly any two vessels had adopted the same rule of measurement, and that consequently very unequal dues were being paid. The Commission had fixed the English ton as the unit on which the dues were to be levied, and representations were soon made to them that this bore unequally on different countries. In order to remedy this inequality as far as possible, I persuaded H.M.'s Government to take measurements according to English rules, of the vessels of foreign nations, so as to establish a comparison between the

English tonnage and that of other nations. The carrying out of this enabled me to submit to the Commission a comparative table by means of which the tonnage on the papers of each ship could be corrected to its English equivalent. This system was brought into operation in the year 1861, but the Commission endeavoured to amend and improve the table by making the measurements themselves. It at the mouth of the Danube, and the English Government was requested to continue the system, so as to provide further data for improving the factors of correction.

It came to light that those decimal factors, though based on an average, bore very hardly on certain forms of vessels, and that it by no means established a perfect equality between ship and ship, though it gave roughly, what was demanded by the treaty. The question came often before the Commission, owing to complaints of individual shipowners, and led them to recommend that the different Governments should arrive at an understanding by which the measurements of ships should be based on certain rules fixed by international agreement. This was a motive which led me to study very carefully the question of tonnage measurement, and as will be seen, this led to important results in my career.

That summer I went to England, in order to see my younger brother, Francis, who had just arrived home from Australia, and whom I had not seen since I went to the Cape in - 1845.

before leaving I took part in the revision of the different regulations which the Commission had put in force for the better government of the navigation. The range of their operations may be gathered from the list of rules, which comprised one for the police of the Port and Roadstead of Sulina, another for those of the river between Isaktcha and the mouth, and others for the pilotage of the lower Danube, and for regulating the service of the lighters.

On my way up the river I met two ladies, the daughters of Admiral Beaufort, who had been travelling in Egypt and Syria. One of them afterwards became Lady Strangford. She published a book on her Eastern travels which was severely criticized by Mr. Augustus Smythe, one of H.M.'s Diplomatic Corps, which criticism led to their meeting and eventually marrying. He became later Viscount Strangford. I found these ladies very agreeable companions, I also fell in with some pleasant Hungarians who persuaded me to remain a little time at Pesth. There was great excitement in Hungary at that time, as the Hungarians were making great efforts to obtain from the Emperor the recognition of their ancient rights as an independent Kingdom, under the Empire. The national costumes were worn everywhere. I found many Hungarians speaking English, and they impressed on me their desire that the English Government should help them in their representations to the Emperor of Austria. At the balls to which I was invited I found the National dance, the Czardas, much in vogue and took part in it, much to the delight of my

hosts. The dance begins with a minuet, changes suddenly into a lively waltz, the music ever getting quicker and quicker, until a pause comes and the sober minuet gives breathing time for another waltz. As the Hungarian Officers danced with their swords swinging and spurs clanking, the clash and excitement may be imagined. The difficulty of steering clear of these accoutrements was also great, but I did not see any accidents occur. After a very pleasant time in Pesth I went on to Vienna, where I visited the picture galleries and other places of interest and then continued my journey to England.

On my arrival, I found that my Brother Frank, the boy of 13 whom I had left at school in 1845, had become a man as tall as myself, with a great beard, and so much resembling me at that time, that I would sometimes be startled at meeting him. We stayed together at the Vicarage at Staines, my Brother Edward's living, where also our Mother and sister lived; the dear Father's death, a few months before, having compelled them to leave Cobham.

After a very pleasant two months in England I saw Frank off on his return journey to Australia, which he made by way of America. My youngest son, Alfred was born on the 14th of October.

I was back in Galatz early in October. I found that the works at the mouth of the Sulina had made satisfactory progress. In 1860 the Commission were requested to examine into the conditions of the fisheries at the mouth of the Kilia, and the different Commissioners had to obtain the authority of their governments to enable them to take up this question. In 1861, all being provided with full powers for the purpose, they entered upon the matter, and some very interesting discussions ensued.

It was evident that Russia, even then, was endeavouring to regain a footing at the Kilia mouth, in resisting which efforts the Austrian and Turkish Commissioners acted with me.

The winter was a very severe one and I passed a part of it in shooting the roe-deer with a party in the Debrudscha hills, where I had had built a rough cottage in the forest near a little Russo-German settlement. The village was called Czukurova, and there we spent happy holidays at different seasons. The sport was good and adventurous, as went after wild boar and wolves as well as deer. In the summer my children could there enjoy the change from the dust laden air of the town to the health-giving mountain breezes. In March 1861, when the ice on the Danube broke up, and navigation was resumed we were pleased to find that the provisional works, which were then if approaching completion, had produced a fine channel across the bar, 18 feet deep; and the Commission began to look forward to finishing them in the summer.

In the early part of the year the Governments had decided to relinquish, for the present at any rate, the idea of improving the St. George's branch.

This furnished to the Russian Commissioner, who was always desirous of restraining the activity of the European Commission within the narrowest limits, and of getting rid of it as soon as possible, a pretext for attempting to bring about the cessation of its functions altogether. As the arguments which he and the French Commissioner put forward had a plausible appearance they met with support from both the Prussian and Sardinian delegates. I had therefore, in the absence of my Austrian colleagues, to contend single handed against this proposal, and successfully staved off any decision until his return in June, when he put forward certain proposals which met with my entire support and Checkmated the Russians. My contention had always been that, if the permanent improvement of the St. George's branch was to be given up, we ought to perfect, as far as possible, the Sulina works, and deepen the insufficient channel, so that vessels entering might be able to ascend the river to the grain ports of Galatz and Ibraila. M. Becke adopted this view, and suggested that the Commission ought to make clear to all the world the great improvement which it had already effected at the mouth and in the general conditions of the navigation, and that, to this effect, they ought to consolidate in the Public Act the regulations and the tariff which they had passed. M. Becke's rguments produced the effect of setting aside for a time the Russian proposal, and eventually led to its being forgotten altogether; for it took quite 4 years to get Turkey and the Governments into agreement as to what this Public Act was to be. He also proposed that there should be a striking official function, declaring the opening of the mouth of the river to vessels of large size.

In August of this year, 1861, the proposed festival took place. The Commission made preparations on a large scale to entertain officials from the Riverain States and from Turkey; a formal procession was made down the river and through the piers, after which a banquet was given in a pavilion temporarily erected for that purpose, and speeches were made, describing all that had been done. Reporters were present, so that accounts of all these proceedings might be published in the European papers. My own part in the speech-making was confined to proposing the health of the Sultan, Abdul Assiz, who had recently come to the throne. The whole thing went off very well, and thenceforward the Commission was occupied in considering works for the improvement of the channel of the Sulina, and in preparing the Public Act, which was future to be the law for all navigation in the Lower Danube.

In the administration of the navigation of the river the Commission had experienced great difficulties in controlling the police. It was not thought desirable to bring the vessels of war, on whose support they depended for the maintenance of their authority, into direct contact with other vessels, on account of the variety of flags, and because there was a risk that vessels of one Power might interfere with vessels of war of another Power. The Commission determined therefore, to appoint an Inspector General of the Navigation, with sub-inspectors under him, who, armed with the authority of the Commission, should take care that the

regulations published by the Commission were properly obeyed. The Turkish Commissioner, however, could not at once take part in this decision, and it was not till the latter end of 1861 that the Commission were able to appoint their Inspector- General. For this post they accepted the nomination by the Sublime Porte of M. Drigalsky, a Polish officer in the Turkish service. This man who was a son-in-law of Col. Malinowski, proved to be a very efficient and active officer. Under his authority and that of his four subordinate agents the Commission was able to obtain complete control of the navigation from Isaktcha to Sulina. The judgements rendered by M. Drigalsky, in accordance with the regulations of the Commission, were subject to an appeal by offenders against those regulations, to the European Commission of the Danube, as Supreme Court. That body, therefore, held the somewhat unusual position of legislating for the navigation, administering the laws by its agents and, finally, judging the cases on appeal. This system was confirmed, and received the authority of all the Powers of Europe. It may appear somewhat anomalous but it worked most satisfactorily and has never, so far as I am aware, after 37 years of its operation, given rise to any complaints.

My chief amusements throughout this period consisted in shooting. Quail, partridges, hares, woodcock and snipe abounded in the country round Galatz, wild fowl in the Delta, and wild boar, wolves &c in the hills of the Dobrudscha. In the summer Bz drove about a good deal, and had picnics and much cricket. We used to send the children away for the hottest weather, sometimes to Czukurova, sometimes to the Adapt Convent, or to Mehadia in the Carpathians; once they went to Kustendjeh and once to the Princes' Islands.

In May my youngest child, Constance, was born, and in that summer I took the older children, Georgina, Charles and Arthur, to England to place them at school. My headquarters there were at my brother's house at Staines. I also visited Mr Holland, the Member for Banbury, and his wife at their house, Dumbleton, in Gloucestershire, with my daughter, Gina. The boys were placed at school at Blackheath, on the recommendation of my brother who had also been at the Proprietary school there. Mr Selwyn was the Headmaster.

During my stay in England my niece, Margaret was born, and I had the pleasure of standing sponsor for her in the Church of Staines.

During this visit I often stayed at the house of my wife's Father, in Cleveland Square. He was very ill, and in fact, died a few days after I left. I returned to Galatz early in September and, as he died on the 6th, our life for some months was a very quiet one.

In March 1863 a very great and lasting sorrow fell upon me. I had heard during the winter that my brother Edward was out of health, and seeking by rest and frequent change of air to recover strength, but I had no idea,

nor apparently had those about him, that he was in any danger. On the 19th March I received by telegram the news of his death. We had been so much to one another all our lives that it was a terrible grief, and the news came quite suddenly in that simple announcement of death for I had nothing to enlighten me as to its cause. I immediately started off, reaching London before the end of the month, to find the poor widow and my Mother and sister in great tribulation. My sister had, a short time before my brother's death, become engaged to be married to the Rev. James St. John Blunt, the Vicar of Old Windsor, near Staines. As the home at Staines must be broken up, it seemed better that the wedding should not be deferred for more than a short time. My first and particular care was to relieve my sister-in-law as much as possible of the pain and trouble of leaving Staines, and to arrange that all her furniture should be stored where it would be well cared for. I escorted her and her child to Oxford, where she remained for a time with her friends, and took a house for my Mother at Old Windsor, not far from my sister's future home, and then went with her to stay at the Vicarage, to help to prepare for the coming bride and bridegroom. The wedding took place on the 13th April, and was performed by the Bishop of Oxford who had been a great friend of my brother's; the wedding was, of course, perfectly quiet and simple.

While at Old Windsor, I had a horse at my disposal to ride about the country which I did with Miss Blunt, through the beautiful woods of Windsor Park, of which they had a key, and eventually I had the great pleasure of seeing my sister and her husband return from their honeymoon. General and Mrs Seymour (afterwards Marquis and Marchioness of Hertford) Col. and Mrs. Howard-Vyse (at that time "Silver Stick") took the lead in organizing a most hearty welcome, accompanied by addresses and the assembling of the parishioners, which showed that the Vicar was very much beloved in his parish.

Finding that Mrs Blunt was anxious as to the future of her grand-son, Harris Bigg Wither, a nice boy of about 16, so I offered to take him out with me to the Danube, and towards the end of May I started with him, and we arrived on the 1st of June.

My wife was in a very poor state of health, and it was thought necessary that she should go to the Baths of Aix-la- Chapelle and thence to England. At the same time, we . decided to send the children, with their governess, to Zaizon, in the Carpathians. This journey was similar to the one I had taken the previous year. Little Constance was a delicate child, and it was thought that the air and baths of this place would be beneficial to her. I sent our interpreter Mr. Flamm, to take charge of the party, who, with all their goods, were packed up in a tented waggon which was drawn by post-horses. They had to be very careful about what they took with them, as the Austrian Custom-house was very particular as to the admission of certain articles. Before the party started, M. Flamm said to me "I hope they have no tea with them, as that will involve trouble". They already had packed several pounds of tea, but I gave orders which

were unluckily forgotten for it to be left behind. When they got to the frontier the question was asked "Have you any tea?" M. Flamm of course said "No". However, they opened one of the bags and there, sure enough, they found some. This produced a most pernicious effect and though it was sundown and the party were some distance from their next halting place the men opened out all the bedding &c and strewed it about the place. The declaration had been made in perfect good faith, but the servants were to blame.

The stay in that country was very beneficial to the children. They went on, afterwards, to Kronstadt, and had a very pleasant time, returning to Galatz after about two months absence. It had by that time been decided that my wife should not return until the following year, as her health required great care; and she took lodgings in London, as her Father's home had been broken up after his death. The winter of 1863-64, passed very quietly in the absence of the mistress of the house, and in my deep mourning.

The work of the Commission presented no striking features and in the early summer of 1864, my wife returned, very much improved in health. The summer passed without any special incident, but the autumn of this year was marked by the very serious illness of our daughter Edith. After leaving Sulina, where the children had passed a part of the summer, she became ill with an attack of typhoid fever, and for three weeks was in a most critical condition. It was on the 21st day of her illness that Dr. Serfioti gave her up. That evening however, a change took place, and she went on gradually improving. Her beautiful hair had been cut off, and she was a sad contrast to the bonny creature she had been before she was taken ill, but thanks be to God, she got well again without a check.

The winter of 1864-65 was very much enlivened by the arrival, towards the end of the autumn, of Mr. Standen's two sisters, for whom he took quarters near our house. We had also, at that time, a very pleasant set of Officers on board the "Weser" and the "Cockatrice". Capt. Johnstone, of the "Weser", was a most agreeable companion. Mr. Ward, who had been Consul since 1860, with his wife and three sisters, had also added to our numbers, as had Mr. and Mrs. Samson; so that the English community in Galatz had increased from various causes, and in the winter of 1864-65 was the largest we had ever known there.

In the preceding summer, I had obtained from Russia two very fine riding horses, for my wife and myself, and I was in the habit of putting them as leaders to the carriage horses and driving four-in-hand. The winter proved a very severe one, and the roads were famous for sleighing, so I used to harness the horses to my sleigh and we had many pleasant drives.

One day early in January, Mrs. Theologos, an English lady married to a Greek, called on us, and I asked her if she had ever sleighed on the Bratish - a lake formed by the overflow of the Pruth a tributary of the

Danube. She said she should never think of going on it as it was too dangerous. I said that I had sleighed there the previous winter again and again, that it was delightful going over the smooth ice covered with snow, and suggested that she had better come with us. I started off my sleigh and made her follow in hers, some Naval Officers, with hired sleighs, also accompanied us. I had with me my wife and three other ladies and Mr. and Mrs. Standen who stood on the board behind. When I got down to the lake, I was astonished not to find the beaten track along which the peasants usually travelled to bring the reeds from the opposite shore for their huts &c. As, however, we had had frost day after day for the last six weeks, I felt convinced that the ice was perfectly safe, put my horses to it and dashed along. We were far ahead of the others. When we had got half way across the lake, which stretched 8 or 10 miles before us, we suddenly came to a ridge of ice, which made me pause as I could not understand it. Mr. Standen said "Let me get down and look". "no, no" I said, "there's a clear place where I can pass" - I had hardly turned my horses when the leaders went through. Before I could think how to get them up, the wheelers were in too, and there we were left in the sleigh on the edge of the thick ice, with four horses struggling in the water before us. We immediately got the ladies out of the sleigh, and detached it from the horses, which we then endeavoured to get to the edge, but without success. Presently one of the wheelers struck his leader on the head with his rough-shod hoof and the horse sank dead. The wheeler came to us at the edge of the ice and with the aid of our companions who had now come up with us, positively lifted him out by sheer strength, without breaking the ice.

The poor brute got on his legs but was so numbed with cold that it could hardly move. Presently, the other wheeler struck his leader in the same way; so both my riding horses were at the bottom of the lake. The heavier of the two wheelers now came to us, and we attempted to lift him out, but we were so exhausted that although we got him half way up, he fell back again. The horse almost spoke to us by his groan of agony at being let go. We fastened a rope to his tail and got one of the other sleighs on to the rope and as we again lifted the horse, we told the sleighman to draw gently and with this assistance we at last got him out. He was terribly exhausted with the cold, having been in the water for half an hour, and could hardly get on his feet. We took the harness off and let the two find their way home as well as they could.

By means of the reins, we fished up the two horses from the bottom of the lake. We took off their harness and let them fall in again. We put the ladies into the other sleighs and they were driven back; then we placed the harness in our empty sleigh and ran back dragging it by hand, very heavy-hearted as can be imagined. I set myself to think how this accident could have happened, and remembered that, after the lake froze early in December that year, there had been blocks of ice in the bend of the Danube below Galatz, which had made the waters of the Pruth rise and pour into the lake. This must have lifted the ice and made a rent across

the lake, and the water, between the edges of the thick ice, had then frozen, but as the level fell again the ice sank and came together crinkling up this thin ice into the ridge I have spoken of, but leaving some places flat such as the thinner ice on to which I turned the horses. It was a happy circumstance that I did not see the open space at first, for I should have driven quickly on to it and the sleigh and all in it must have gone to the bottom. This state of things accounted for my not finding a road across the ice. The peasants had been crossing the lake at a point beyond where the crack had occurred. This accident was rather a damper, and destroyed our pleasure in sleighing for the rest of the winter, for the two horses that we saved were never fit for much and one of them eventually dropped down dead. However, in spite of this misfortune, we had a very gay Carnival. We got up private Theatricals in the house - the dining-room was fitted with a stage - and we played several pieces with the aid of the Naval Officers. My wife very cleverly arranged the costumes for the different characters, and we acted "Box and Cox", "Deaf as a Post" "Paul Pry" and "Bombastes Furioso". Our audience being principally foreigners, Greek German and French, they could not very well follow the dialogue, but we had epitomes, explaining the whole piece, printed and given to each guest. After the play was over we had a dance in the "Salon" above. To our rehearsals, before the pieces were given, we used to invite the sailors of the men-of-war to come up, and they of course, could enter into the fun of the plays.

The winter went uncommonly well, because, what with the preparation for the plays, and acting, the time passed very pleasantly. We also had our usual shooting trip into the Czukurova Hills where we had very good sport.

In 1864 it was decided to erect a lighthouse at the entrance of the St. George. It was lit for the first time in May 1865, and in the same month I accompanied some of my colleagues to the St. George's mouth for the purpose of examining it. We had a very interesting trip, and, on our way back, stopped at Toultscha in order to dine with our new President, Amid Rassim Pasha, who proved to be a very genial and agreeable colleague. He was not only President of the Commission but also Governor General of the Mouths of the Danube, and rose subsequently to even higher commands.

He served us a dinner in true Turkish style, - of fifteen courses - of which 1, for one, partook very abstemiously, but my Italian colleague, M. Strambio, who was rather a "bon-vivant", seemed much the worse for it the next day. Though a very pleasant and agreeable companion M. Strambio was not very courageous. He was extremely inquisitive, and put such pointed questions to our host that Ahmid Rassim indulged in a little revenge. Pointing to his body-servant, Aha, he said to Strambio, "There is a man so devoted to me that I have only to tell him to stick a knife into you and he would do it immediately." M. Strambio grew very pale upon

this, as he had done on a previous occasion, during our excursion, when he thought the boat would capsize.

The year 1865 saw the completion of our Public Act. The Powers had all agreed, and the Sublime Porte at last consented to it, and thus it became part of the International Law of Europe. The Act reserved to the Commission the power of amending the different regulations and tariffs annexed to it, and already, in 1868-9 they were occupied in making amendments based on the experience gained.

CHAPTER IX

The Danube (1865 - 1869)

After the signature of the Public Act, I brought before my colleagues a proposal to resume the discussion which I had opened in 1861-2, with a view, either to undertake permanent works in the St. George's branch, or to consolidate our works at the mouth of the Sulina and pursue a definite programme for the improvement of that branch. I now urged upon my colleagues that they should altogether renounce the idea of doing anything to the St. George, and that they should decide upon a programme for the permanent improvement of the Sulina. Hartley had drawn up a report for carrying out this project at an estimated cost of about £125,000.

The Commission arrived at a decision favourable to this proposal and, in order to enable it to be put in hand, it was decided to take steps to raise a loan, and negotiations were entered into for the purpose of obtaining this amount. In the meantime, the necessity for these works which I had so stoutly stood up for in 1861, had become more and more apparent. It had been decided in 1862 that further operations should be carried out and we had raised a loan from Mr. Norik of a German Bank at Hamburg for a portion of these, but we required a much larger sum for the permanent works agreed to in 1865, and so we entered into negotiations with the same Bank to obtain the necessary funds. In the spring of 1865, I got leave again to go home for the summer and took with me my third son, Frank, to put him in school, and Alfred, too, who wanted a change from the rather trying climate. We were accompanied on our journey by the Miss Standens, who were returning to England. We took the route via Vienna, Nuremberg, and Brussels. At Vienna, these young ladies, who were excellent musicians helped me to choose a piano, which was a great treasure to us for many a year. It was one by Streicher. At Nuremberg we saw the Castle and all the various frightful instruments of torture used in former days. We also visited the Valhalla, and from Brussels we made an excursion to the field of Waterloo.

On my arrival in England, I got permission from Lord Darnley to furnish the house at Cobham, in which my Father had lived for so many years - my old home, which was standing empty - where I could have the children with me, during the holidays. I thus had all my four sons and my eldest daughter with me. The place was a mere shadow of its former self - it was not like the same old home that I had lived in for so many years. It had however, the charm of being in the midst of the lovely country about Cobham, and all the old friends of my youth were living either there or in the neighbourhood, so that we passed two months there with very great delight. I got a carriage and horse to drive about, and we took part in the cricket and various amusements that were going on. Our stay there gave me an opportunity of making my children known to these old friends, thus enabling them to form friendships which have lasted ever since. This visit to England also enabled me to see my Mother and sister at Old

Windsor, and my sister in-law and her child at Reading. The pleasure of seeing my sister was much dimmed by the distressing state of health in which I found her. she had lost one child, a girl, but had still one little son left her. Her health was so deplorably bad, that her days were evidently numbered. My Mother I found living comfortably in the cottage which I had taken for her two years before, and the whole arrangement seemed to promise to work well. I placed my son Frank, at school with his brothers, at Blackheath, and left the three boys in the house of Mr. Pember. I arranged for them to spend their holidays in the house of Mr. Simpson, a clergyman, at Maidstone, where Gina spent hers with the Miss Kellys. The sojourn in England was very beneficial to Alfred, and after Gina and her brothers had gone to school, I took him back to Galatz, with the servants that I had engaged to go out there with me. I had started life in Galatz taking out English servants, but had found it a very costly and troublesome business to have them in that country, where they could not speak a word of the language. It was unfortunate too, that many of them turned out very badly indeed. However, I made a last trial on this occasion, but this lot did not turn out much better than some of those who had gone before them.

During the winter of 1865-6, I had a longer time than usual in the Dobrudscha Hills as I had three weeks before Christmas and another fortnight afterwards, in January. Among the other companions that I took back to the Danube were two setters and a fine St. Bernard. During our journey, on one occasion, the guard came to me in the middle of the night and said he wished I would come and chain these dogs to another truck, as he was afraid to touch them. Thinking I was on the side of a platform, I stepped down to the rail doubling up one knee. The pain was excruciating, and I had hurt myself a good deal. I found the dogs were doing no harm. The knee got better without much difficulty, but in the following winter, I slipped in the snow and again doubled the same knee under me, which caused me great pain. However, I went on shooting for several days, walking nearly twenty miles a day, and at the end of that time my usual rough waggon drive back to Galatz, a journey of several hours getting very much stiffened in the process.

This confirmed the lameness and I was troubled with it for some years. In the year 1866, we all went to Mehadia, in the hope that the change would benefit my wife and children, and that the water would cure my injured joint.

This year was an important one in many ways for the war all through that winter put a stop to our hopes of getting the loan from the North German Bank at Hamburg, with which we were in negotiations and the financial difficulties of the Commission became very great. I had always taken a leading part in obtaining funds for our works, and I suggested that we should raise £10,000 by issuing bonds paying a good rate of interest which would induce people to take up, and so enable us to carry on the work till we could tide over our difficulties. This plan was adopted and I

was able to get many of the Bonds subscribed for by friends in England and on the Danube. During our stay at Mehadia the war between Austria-Hungary and Prussia was going on, and I used to read the accounts of the campaigns in the English newspapers sent to me there, as I lay in the baths of the Sulphur water which I was taking to try and get my knee well. The Establishment included a Military Hospital, and we met there some of the wounded and others who had taken part in the campaign, and gathered that the number of men of different nationalities brought together in the Austrian Regiments, rather weakened their cohesion. Wallachians, Moravians, Italians, and Germans mixed together did not feel the same reliance upon one another as if they had all been one nationality. The Hungarian regiments were I was told, more homogeneous in their composition.

After we got back from Mehadia, Gina returned home from England having finished her education. She had a beautiful voice which had been trained, and her singing gave great pleasure to us all and to our friends also. In November of that year I had the great grief of losing my only sister, who succumbed to Bright's disease. This complaint for a long time sapped her strength; and really originated in a serious attack of scarlet fever, which she had had fourteen years before - its existence had not been discovered until after the birth of her first child. Her death was a great grief to us all, as her character was a very beautiful one, and she was beloved by everyone who knew her. We felt very deeply for her husband St. John Blunt, and his dear little boy, only eight months old.

The winter of 1866-7 passed without any remarkable incident. The Mehadia Baths had not done much for my knee and I was still very lame. our works at the mouth of the river were resumed in the spring and as my knee was giving me great trouble, I determined to take the Baths at Hall in the Salz-Kammer-Gut, and later in the year got leave of absence for the purpose. We agreed that my wife should at the same time, make a visit to England to be with her boys in their holidays. So, leaving Gina and the younger children under the care of their Governess we took the steamer on the 25th of May for Vienna. There I called on my old friend Lord Bloomfield, and saw Mr. Weikersheim, our Consul- General, whom I tried to interest in helping the Commission to raise the money required. On the 31st of May I left Vienna for the little station of St. Peter's, whence I drove to Hall, passing through Styr, a quaint old town, at the junction of the Ems and Styr rivers. My wife saw me established in my lodgings, and I accompanied her next day to Wels, another station on the railway, whence she took the express train for Paris and London. I began treatment at Hall on the 2nd of June and remained there until the 4th of July. I derived great benefit from the treatment, of lodwasse (iodine water) which I drank, bathed in, and used in a bandage round my knee. It was rather lonely work living at Hall, but the country round it was beautiful and I was able to amuse myself by sketching and I had also plenty of books. There being a regular postal communication with Galatz and England, I also had many letters to read and write.

The affairs of the Commission naturally occupied much of my thoughts and, during my stay at Hall, I got a summons to Vienna in order to further the objects of the Commission with regard to the loan. I went into Vienna on the 16th June and, for the next two days was closely occupied with negotiations with Mr. Weikersheim which, however, did not come to a satisfactory conclusion. I had the advantage at Vienna of discussing the affairs of the Commission with Mr. Mallet of the Board of Trade, with the result that I received a telegram from Lord Stanley (subsequently Lord Derby) who was then Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, desiring me to repair to London. On the 4th July, therefore, I journeyed, via Stuttgart and Cologne, to London. On the road I heard of my promotion to Lieut. Colonel.

My visit to England was very interesting in many ways. I joined my wife and children at the sea-side, and was able to get orders for her and my eldest son to go on board the "Tanjore" to be present at the Naval Review, which Her Majesty had ordered for the Sultan of Turkey, who was then on a visit to England. The "Tanjore" was a ship told off to carry of ficial people and had a place next the Queen's yacht in the procession through the fleet. The fleet consisted of two squadrons, one of the old screw line-of-battle ships that had taken part in the Crimean war, and the other of the new ironclads which this country had begun to build in those days.

It had been intended that these two squadrons should manoeuvre outside, but the weather was so bad on the appointed day that the manoeuvring was given up, and the two squadrons remained in parallel lines, the Queen and her Guest passing between them, and taking up a position at the further extremity to witness a sham fight as they lay at anchor. It was a most picturesque scene, for the high wind carried away the smoke which generally obscures a naval action and the flashing guns of the ships seen through the drifting smoke had a very fine effect.

After a time, when this was over, we had the advantage from our ship of seeing a most interesting ceremony. I could distinctly make out through my glasses and I have no doubt others on board saw as clearly as I did, Her Majesty decorating the Sultan with the order of the Garter. I met several friends on board, and it was altogether, a most interesting day, especially to my wife, and to my son, who was then a boy of 16.

As regards my Commission business, I was able to make much progress with H.M.'s Government. I had frequent interviews at the Foreign Office and the Board of Trade and as usual, met with very little encouragement from Mr. Hammond, the Permanent Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office. But, to my great satisfaction, I found Lord Stanley fully alive to the representations which I was able to make to him with regard to the position of the Danube Commission, and the importance of our being

able to obtain the money to complete the works at the mouth of the Sulina and in the Branch. I had urged upon his Lordship that if the other Powers would not give any assistance, that it would be to the British interest in the River, that this country should advance the money by itself. I pointed out to him that there was not the slightest risk to be incurred in making that advance, as the dues which we were raising at the mouth of the river were already so large, that they were amply sufficient to pay off the interest and sinking fund on a loan; especially if we could get this loan on the moderate terms which a Government guarantee would render practicable.

We were now paying as much as 10 or 12 per-cent for the money, but a Government guarantee should reduce the interest to some 3 or 4 per-cent and thus make the burden lighter. Lord Stanley took a broad and statesmanlike view, and directed Mr. Hammond to draw up a memorandum for him to send to the Treasury urging my point. I must say that Mr. Hammond, although himself opposed to the measure drew up an admirable paper which he desired me to look through, and which I could not myself have written more forcibly urging my Board of Trade which had always stood by me in this matter, eventually consented that either this country should make the loan itself or should join with other Powers in guaranteeing the amount required. This was a most satisfactory conclusion to my visit to England. I was able also, to confirm the interest which my wife's uncle, Mr. H. Maynard, took in the affairs of the Commission. He had long been trying to procure a loan for us in London where his large business connection enabled him to put us in communication with financial houses. This following up of the thread of our affairs through Mr. Maynard was still necessary, because, although Lord Stanley had taken up my proposal so warmly, I could not know for some time after that, what reception the Treasury would give to his proposals. Therefore, I continued my endeavour to form a financial combination which should be of use to the Commission, supposing that eventually the Treasury would not consent.

With regard to my private and personal matters, the visit was one of great happiness to me. It enabled me to see my dear Mother again, as it turned out, for the last time before her death. My wife and I visited many of our friends until the middle of September, when we went over to Paris and stayed for a few days to see the Great Exhibition which, at that time, was in full swing. My wife then returned to London, and I started for Galatz, via Vienna, where I met my former colleague, Mr. de Becke, and Count Beust with whom I had subsequently more important dealings. I remained three or four days in Vienna and on arriving at Galatz I visited the works at the mouth of the Sulina, and found they were making very satisfactory progress, though on a small scale. The winter of 1867-8, was much occupied with matters connected with the raising of the loan for the permanent works and with correspondence and discussions relative to the proper light-house to be established for the navigation of the Danube.

On the first day of 1868 my dear Mother died, at the age of 76. Her latter years had been soothed and comforted by my brother's widow, with whom she lived latterly and, in whose house at Reading she died. She was buried at Cobham.

The spring of 1868 saw the consummation of the efforts I had made and of the support given by Lord Stanley, as, on the initiative of H.M. Government, all the Powers, except Russia, had consented to guarantee the loan for the permanent works. The Government consented also at my suggestion that the firm issuing the loan should apply to them in the first instance, for payment of any sum required to make up the annual charge of interest and sinking fund, and that they should recover their share from the other Governments. This, of course, simplified negotiations with the financial firm, and I may here say that neither H.M. Government nor any other was ever called upon to make good any annual payment, because the revenues of the Commission were always amply sufficient for the purpose. An act of Parliament was passed called "The Danube Works Loan Act" authorizing Her Majesty to give this guarantee, and I received on the 30th. April 1868, full powers under the Great Seal of England, to sign a convention for the purpose.

I may here mention a sad occurrence which took place just about this time. My Italian colleague, M. Susinno, took very much to heart my renouncing, on the part of the English Government, any intention of taking up permanent works in the mouth of the St. George. His reasons for this were quite inexplicable to us, as he had had no part in the original decisions; he thought, however, that the course taken reflected in some sense on his performance of his duties, and committed suicide. This, of course, had a very painful effect upon his colleagues, and especially on myself, as he attributed to my action what he judged to be a misfortune, though I never could consider that anything I had done or said entitled him to take this view. This occurrence, to some extent, marred my satisfaction at the triumph of my recent policy. The issue of the loan was now undertaken and carried out by the house of Bischoffsheim and Co., with whom Mr. Maynard had put us in communication, and on terms very favourable to the Commission. The loan was concluded at 4 per-cent, the interest and sinking fund to be paid off in 14 years after the payment of the last instalment of the loan to the Commission.

The works could now be taken up with energy. Those at the mouth of the river, were speedily concluded and those in the river branch were continued. The works at the mouth consisted principally in converting the old timber piers into solid reefs of cement blocks raised on a sub-stratum of loose stone, which had been thrown in pell-mell on either side of the piles, and had with time consolidated into a very firm foundation on which to build permanent piers. The result of this consolidation of the piers was to increase the depth from 17 to 21 feet in the navigable channel; a result on which we could look with great satisfaction when we

considered the state of the mouth at the time of undertaking our duties in 1856.

In this year, 1868, I made a very interesting journey, with my wife and daughter and Lieut. Collins of the Royal Navy, to Odessa and thence to the Crimea. At Odessa we made the acquaintance of our Consul, Mr. Stevens, and of the Governor-General, General Kotzebue, from whom we received much attention. We stayed some days in Odessa and very much enjoyed the change from the half-civilized and ill-organized town of Galatz, where the streets were hardly paved, and the Municipal Government was most lax, to the highly centralized authority of Russia in one of its most thriving towns, where the buildings were good and the streets well paved; where too, there was a good theatre, and a fine harbour. It was altogether, a pleasing contrast to what, at that time, we were accustomed in Moldavia.

We took boat at Odessa for Sebastopol where we put up at a modest hotel. We found that at that date, Russia had done nothing to restore the town from the destruction which the siege had caused 13 years before. The forts were still in ruins and the harbour and docks had hardly been touched. The Government seemed occupying itself only in building churches in memory of the men who had fallen in the siege. A very fine church, dedicated to the Twelve Apostles was being built in the town itself, and on the north side, at the top of the cemetery where so many gallant Russians lay buried, a pyramid had been constructed, the interior of which was beautifully fitted as "The Church of the Four Evangelists". This was so far advanced that we could judge of the eventual beauty of it from the rich marbles with which the four angles of the church, in the corresponding faces of the pyramid, were decorated.

We traversed the ground, on which the English and French armies had been encamped and where they had had constructed works against the town: and we visited the cemeteries where our own and the French dead lay buried. General Kotzebue had assured us that there were 116 of these cemeteries and represented to me the sad dilapidations of the greater part of them, urging me to report to H.M. Government the desecration of the English graves. He pointed out that the French had collected all their dead in one spot which was properly cared for, but that nothing had been done to protect the English grave-yards. I told him that I was there only as a private individual on a visit, and I did not conceive it to be any business of mine: but when I got to the Crimea and visited these graveyards, I found even the principal one on the Cathcart Hill, which had been fenced in, and where the graves had been marked by handsome tombstones, in a very bad state. When I saw how the fencing was broken down so that the cattle could get in, that many of the stones were overthrown and defaced, and that, in fact, as the General had represented, the whole of these cemeteries showed signs of the most painful neglect, I resolved to make a report upon them to the Government. I noticed the care with which the French had collected in one large cemetery as many

of the bones of their dead as they could bring together. In the centre was the chapel where a daily service was held by a priest, to whose care the whole place was confided. Surrounding it, on the four sides of the enclosure, there were a number of small buildings, each representing a brigade of the French army. On each of these was given the number of the Brigade, the names of the Officers who had been interred, with the Regiments they belonged to, and the number of men in each building where they had been laid together. In this way the whole place presented an aspect of being cared for; there was evidence of respect for the dead and no desecration could occur. I felt that we could not possibly undertake such a scheme, as I thought that the stationing of a retired non-commissioned officer in an out-of-the-way country, where he could have no companions and no supervision, would probably end in his neglecting his charge. I therefore proposed to the Government that they should erect a large pyramid in the most conspicuous part and that they should get leave from the Russian Government to exhume the various bodies scattered about over the Crimea, and bury them in one common grave over which this monument should be built, the names of the Officers and men being inscribed upon it.

On my return to Odessa I mentioned to General Kotzebue, that I had decided to make a report to the Government. I told him what I proposed to do and enquired whether, if the Government undertook it and sent a man-of-war to superintend the exhumation of the dead and their interment afterwards with proper honours, that course would be sanctioned by the Russian Government. He assured me that no difficulty would be placed in our way. I was, therefore, able to incorporate this assurance in my report. I must confess that I put in this report with some diffidence, questioning whether the Foreign Office would approve of my having gone out of my way and proper sphere of duty in addressing them on the subject. I got no answer to my appeal, but, in the following year, when I was at Home, I asked the question as to whether they had received the despatch and what had been the upshot of it. It appeared that, the despatch had been well received at the Foreign Office and forwarded to the Treasury with a recommendation that something should be done. As to the cost, I had mentioned the sum of £20,000 but, unfortunately, this was too large a sum of money for the Treasury to sanction, which fact only showed a painful forgetfulness of the services rendered by the men 14 years before.

Before leaving the Crimea, we determined to visit some of the other places of interest. We therefore engaged an interpreter and set off by carriage to Balaclava. We took boat and rowed down the harbour, a most remarkable inlet with high towering cliffs on either side of a narrow entrance, but all deep water inside, in which during the war our ships were able to lie in perfect security, and support the military operations. After our little boating excursion, we made our way up the Baidar valley, so often visited by our troops during the siege, and there we had the misfortune to find that our carriage, the only one we could get in

Sebastopol, was of very bad construction, for the axles heated, and the wheels became fixed, so that they would not revolve. Consequently, a couple of miles out of Baidar, we had ignominiously to leave our carriage and get a yoke of oxen to draw it up the hill. In the village we found smiths who were able to detach the wheels from the axle and repair them, and the next morning we were able to resume our journey. Our plans for that night had been sadly interfered with, as we had intended to go on to the beautiful palace of Alupka, the property of Prince Woronzoff, where he hospitably placed at the disposal of travellers a nicely furnished lodge, where they may put up, and be entertained by the servants who are always kept up there. Unhappily, we had to stop at the village of Baidar, where sleep was impossible, as the whole place was infested with fleas. We spent a most miserable night, half-starved, having only tea, and eggs and such bread as we had with us, and when we heard that the carriage was mended we determined to start off the first thing in the morning, and to get down to Alupka, as we had been told that the view of the sunrise from the top of the pass, before descending to that place, was a magnificent sight. We were quite ready to set off at any hour of the morning for we had not slept a wink all night, so we arrived early at the pass, where an archway had been built to mark the spot whence the view was to be obtained. It was certainly lovely, and we highly appreciated it, as well as some hot coffee we got there. We got down to Alupka, and there found the most hospitable entertainment at the palace of Prince Woronzoff. We had a substantial repast, and the most delicious fruits. We were there just at the height of the vintage, and grapes and peaches abounded. Then we visited the palace which is a splendid building of green porphyry, and arranged with all the luxury possible. We went down to the sea and were able to bathe at the bottom of the gardens, which were very beautiful: in fact, the whole place seemed a paradise. Unfortunately, our scheme of journeying had been thrown out by the misfortune of the Baidar valley, so we were only able to push on to Yalta, the fashionable watering place for the inhabitants of the Crimea and of Southern Russia. We passed on our road, Livadia, the palace of the Czars, but it was too late in the day to attempt to visit it. We got rooms at the hotel at Yalta and passed the night comfortably enough. We planned to go to Simferopol the next day, via Acushta. I must here say that we were tied to time because the steamer that was to take us to Odessa was due at Sebastopol on a certain day, and if we missed that, we should have to wait another week at Sebastopol: we were therefore bound to push on, and hurried up through the mountains under the Schafsberg to get to Simferopol.

We were fated, however, to misfortune in our travels through the Crimean Mountains for when we got into the hills, we found it blocked by trains of waggons, and we had to wait. Night at length fell, and found us in a miserable village, something like Baidar, where we were obliged to stop, and we experienced an exact repetition of the miserable time we had had two nights before at that place. There was nothing to eat, and an abundance of fleas. Continuing our journey next morning, we passed

through beautiful country getting on to the road again at daybreak, and reached Simferopol in time for Breakfast, and we could not afford time to remain long there. It was a place of no very great interest, so we set our faces to get back to Sebastopol the next day to be ready for our steamer. As we journeyed along our interpreter said, "Would you like to see Bakhtcheserai?". "Certainly, if there is anything to be seen" we answered. "It is very well worth seeing and lies just over there" he said. We could discover nothing whatever till we got to the edge of the plain, where the town lay below us. It has been a source of satisfaction ever since that we made this divergence from our route. The Russians had had the good taste to leave the palace, mosques, and everything in perfect preservation, as they had been found at the end of the last century, when Suvaroff captured the place from the Tartars. The palace of the Tartar Khan had been kept up in exactly the same condition in which it was found by Suvaroff, and the tombs of the old Khans were all preserved in their original state. The streets of the town were like a reflection of the "Arabian nights". in the front of the houses there were booths in which the various copper-smiths or carpenters were pursuing their trades and cobblers were sitting, crosslegged, working away in front of their houses.

Leaving the town, we passed on to a set of caves, which we entered and found therein a beautiful church ornamented and decorated in the Byzantine style. We were told that these were the caves where Christians had held their services in the old days when the Mussulman rule prevailed. They pointed out to us in the distance on the hill-side, the place where the Jews had lived, who were supposed to be remnant of the ten tribes of Samaria. We did not attempt to explore the caves, but all we saw in Bakhtche-serai interested us exceedingly, and made us feel that we had come upon a real bit of old Asiatic life. We were bound to push on for Sebastopol so as to reach the town by nightfall.

Next morning we got on board our vessel and returned to Odessa. There we visited a great Fair, resorted to by traders from all parts of the South of Russia and the neighbouring provinces of Turkey in Asia and to which great quantities of Asiatic produce, silks, furs, jewels, carpets &c, had been brought down, and we were able to make some purchases of which some remain until this day. From Odessa we made our way back to the Danube, having enjoyed a most interesting fortnight.

After the usual meetings of the Commission in the Spring, I went home to England with my youngest boy, Alfred, to place him at school with his brothers. Another object of my journey was to let Sir William Fergusson operate on Arthur's mouth to close the open palate with which he had been born. This was done, and great hopes were entertained of his speech becoming much clearer than it had been. Another object of my visit home was to make arrangements for the voyage of my son Charles to South Australia. He had suffered so much from asthma for several months that I had been obliged to remove him from school, and place him with a family at Torquay, where we hoped that the mild climate would enable

him to get through the winter, 1868-9. Now, late in the following spring, seeing that no permanent improvement seemed likely to ensue, I had decided to send him out to my brother Frank in South Australia, who had kindly undertaken the charge. With this object, we all went down to Plymouth in the beginning of August, and saw Charles embark on the "Yatala" for Adelaide.

To give the other boys the benefit of a pleasant tour during the holidays, we stayed at Plymouth, going over the dockyard and visiting the beautiful seat of Lord Mount Edgecumbe. We took our journey hence along the South Coast to Penzance, from whence we visited Land's End and St. Michael's Mount. From Penzance we journeyed to Ilfracombe where we spent some days in the company of my sister, Mrs. Edward Stokes and her daughter Margaret. We all travelled together via Barnstaple to Lynton, where we met Mrs. Murray and her children. Mrs. Murray's husband had been Rector of Southfleet, not very far from Cobham, where he died in 1854 of scarlet fever, and at that time we had become very intimate with them. In Mrs. Murray and her children, I have always taken the greatest interest. We had a week at Lynton. The weather was very lovely and the country in great beauty: the moor-lands glowing in the rich colouring of gorse and heather. The beautiful scenery about Waters-Meet and the Valley of Rocks, and walks and drives in the neighbourhood, made our sojourn there most delightful, and the company of the Murrays and other friends whom we met, added to this pleasure. At the end of our week we went by coach along the North coast of Devon to Taunton. We had a lovely drive and took train for Bristol where we parted with Mrs. Stokes and her daughter and paid a visit to my wife's brother Alec Maynard, who, with his wife, was living at Horfield Barracks. From Horfield we visited Clifton and the beautiful church of St. Mary Redcliffe at Bristol. Here we were met by Capt. Johnstone R.N. who had commanded H.M.S. "Weser" on the Danube, and who had been a frequent visitor at my house at Galatz, where, among other things, he had taken a great part in the festivities of the Carnival of 1865 which I have previously mentioned. St. Mary Redcliffe is a lovely church and made a great impression on us. After leaving Horfield, I took my boys back to school and eventually returned to the Danube.

CHAPTER X

The Danube (1869 - 1873)

By the end of 1869 the consolidation of the north pier had been nearly completed, with excellent effect upon the depth at the mouth and it was decided to erect an iron lighthouse at the end of the pier in place of the temporary one hitherto in use.

The affairs of the Commission generally, were very much in my hands at this time as, with the exception of the Russian, all the Commissioners had been changed more or less frequently, and therefore the long experience gained since 1856 gave me a preponderating influence at our councils, where, since his efforts to nullify our exertions had proved ineffectual, the Russian Commissioner worked more or less cordially with me in advancing the general interests of the navigation. I was the Commissioner who represented the principal commercial interest in the Danube, the tonnage of the English ships being now superior to that of all the other vessels trading there. The part also which I had played in solving the difficulties as regards finance during the last 10 or 11 years, gave me additional weight, and as I had made a careful study of the statistics of the Commission, which were very interesting in showing the growth of trade and its importance to different countries, I was able from time to time to present reports upon them which very much influenced the decisions of my colleagues. A matter which exercised my mind very much at this time, was the bearing of the Articles of the Tariff upon the English Ships. When the tariff was first levied there was scarcely any steam navigation on the river except by the small steam packs of Austria and France, but the improvements in steam vessels and the growth of the English trade since the mouth was opened had led to an immense increase in the number of English steamships. Thus, from only 16 vessels of 9,000 tons in 1862, our steam navigation had grown to 226 vessels of a tonnage of 119,000 tons in 1869. As these vessels were not mail boats they did not enjoy any of the advantages originally granted to the French and Austrian packets, whilst the latter, owing to the improved depth in the river, had been transformed from insignificant post-boats into cargo carrying vessels, and were thereby enjoying an unfair privilege over the English ships, as they only paid dues amounting to one quarter of those exacted from other vessels. By successive proposals I finally succeeded in rectifying this dis-proportion.

After the Commission's meetings in the spring of 1870, I went with my wife and daughter to Constantinople. We stopped at Petala's Hotel, Therapia, where in 1856, I had lived for some months. The object of my visit was to show them the beauties of the Bosphorous, and to confer with Sir Henry Elliot, H.M. Ambassador at the Porte, on various matters. When we arrived the weather was cold and wet, although it was the month of May, and I unfortunately caught cold in my eyes. The Embassy surgeon made light of it, and, as the weather improved, we set about visiting all the places of interest. We went to see the Sultan going to

Mosque; it was a brilliant day and the heat was excessive. In the afternoon I met the Doctor of the "Cockatrice" who at once asked me what was the matter with my eyes. I told him that I had got cold in them, and suffered some pain. He said, "You ought to go home immediately and remain in a dark room, or you will lose your sight." He gave me Balladonna drops to open the pupils, which had got contracted and fixed by an attack of iritis, and, as the "Cockatrice" was leaving for the Danube on the following day, he put me into the hands of Dr. Patterson of the Seamen's Hospital at Pera, whose experience of ten years in Egypt had made him very expert in treating cases of Ophthalmia like that from which I was suffering. After a course of treatment which lasted 8 weeks, and being shut up in a dark room, I gradually, thanks to his skill and to God's goodness recovered my sight, but I have ever since been subject to attacks of a similar character, namely that of rheumatic ophthalmia coupled with iritis.

While I was shut up at Petala's a great catastrophe occurred in Pera. A fire broke out which destroyed several acres of the town. H.M. Embassy, although it had been built within retired grounds, with the express object of protection from the terrible conflagrations which, occur from time to time, at Constantinople, nevertheless caught fire. The iron shutters became red hot from the heat of the surrounding buildings, and this fine structure was entirely gutted. Before I left Constantinople my brother officer, Major Crossman, R.E. was sent out to examine the building and report as to the best mode of restoring it. This was the first time I met this officer, with whom, in subsequent years I had a good deal to do.

As soon as it was prudent to move, I left Constantinople with my wife to return to Galatz, leaving Gina for a time on a visit to the Guaracinos, as she enjoyed the life. When we got home we found it necessary, on account of an epidemic of diphtheria, to send our other children and their Governess to Mehadia.

The struggle which at this time broke out between France and Germany deeply engaged the attention of all, and during the remainder of this year, as our works at the mouth of the river drew to completion, our thoughts were entirely directed towards the bloody campaign in France. The disasters of the French army led the Czar, in the autumn, to denounce those articles of the Treaty of Paris which imposed great restrictions upon Russia in the Black Sea. The sanction of that Treaty depended on the ability of France and England to oblige Russia to adhere to its provisions. The utter destruction of the French army therefore gave to the Czar an opportunity, of which he was not slow to avail himself, of breaking loose from the stipulations of the Treaty. The English Government at first wrote a haughty despatch, insisting on its maintenance, but this tone quickly gave place to a more moderate one, suggesting a Conference to be held in London for the consideration of the Czar's declaration. Mr. Gladstone, who was always ready to surrender English interests abroad, saw great justice in the Czar's desire to be free

of the restrictions placed upon him in the Black Sea. I, of course only knew of what was going on through the newspapers, but it occurred to me that whatever concessions might be made to Russia as regards her fortifications at Sebastopol and her fleets in the Black Sea, the rights conferred by the Treaty on European Powers to uphold the freedom of navigation in the Danube, ought not to be sacrificed. I therefore wrote very strongly to Lord Granville on the subject, setting forth the view that English interests were of such paramount importance in the Danube, that Great Britain ought to maintain its share in the control of the river, which, under present arrangements, was only extended to the Spring of 1871. I urged that this was an excellent opportunity, while conceding points to Russia, for insisting on our permanent hold upon the Danube.

Towards the end of November I received an intimation from the Foreign Office, that the Austrian Government had requested that I might be allowed to proceed to Vienna to discuss with them matters connected with the navigation of the Danube. This was a very great compliment to me, and a recognition of the friendly cooperation which had always existed between their Commissioners and myself during the 14 years that we had worked together, as well as of their conviction that I could bring to bear on the discussion with them, a greater knowledge of the question than their own recently appointed representative. I lost no time in starting for Vienna, and a very rough journey I had, for the winter had commenced with deep snow, and the navigation of the river having ceased, I had to make my way firstly by the unfinished railway from Galatz to Roman, and then by road across the broken country to Lemberg, where I took train again for Vienna. There I was most kindly received by Lord Bloomfield, and placed in communication with the Austrian Government. The Minister, through whom I had to act, was Baron Gagern, the Permanent Under Secretary of the Foreign Office --- a most courteous and pleasant old gentleman, who spoke English perfectly. Under his directions I saw the various Ministers of the Austrian Government - Count Beust, the Imperial Chancellor, Baron de Pretis, Minister of Commerce, Baron Orzy, a Hungarian Minister, and Count Julian Andrassy, Prime Minister of Hungary, to see whom I went down to Pesth with Baron Gagern. With all these Ministers I had most interesting conversations, of which I took accurate notes at the time.

Early one morning when I was in my bath, I heard a heavy knock at the door, and asked "Who's there?" "Baron Gagern". "Well, Baron", I said, "I should be very happy to see you, but I am in my bath at this moment; if you like to come in you may." I wrapped a towel round me and he entered. He told me that Count Beust wished to see me at 9 o'clock, so I accordingly got ready as soon as I could. These interviews with the Austrian Ministers extended over several days, and I found that the views which I had expressed to Lord Granville met with very warm support in Austria. They quite agreed with me that, if the Russian power was to be re-instated in the Black Sea, the European control over the mouths of the Danube ought certainly to be perpetuated. One of the arguments which I

had used was that, as the guarantee of the Danube loan extended to the year 1883, the existence of the European Commission of the Danube ought, in my opinion, to be made permanent or, at all events, prolonged to that date, and that the jurisdiction of the Commission should be extended to Ibraila: that this town was the real terminus of the sea-going vessels which paid dues at the mouth and that therefore the Commission ought to have control of the navigation over the whole of the river to that point.

Lord Bloomfield recommended me to write to the Foreign Office, and request permission to go on to London, to lay before H.M. Government the views of the Austrian Government, which had been communicated to me by the various Ministers. No reply came to this application for some days, and he advised me to set out without waiting for an answer, because the Conference was to assemble very soon. I therefore, acting on this advice, started homewards and arrived in London in December, I at once repaired to the Foreign Office, where I was greeted by Mr. Hammond, the Permanent Under Secretary, with the enquiry what I was doing there! I said that I had come home by the advice of the Ambassador to lay before Lord Granville the views expressed to me by the Austro-Hungarian Ministers. He told me I ought, as a soldier, to know better than to desert my post. I replied "I beg your pardon, Sir, I left my post by your orders." My post was, of course, at Galatz. He told me that I could see Lord Granville. I saw him, and found him an icicle. He asked me no questions. However I was told to wait in England for the present. In a very few days I received from the Foreign Office a bundle of papers on which I was desired to report. They contained the views of the Austrian Government on the Danube question. This gave me a fine opportunity of again urging my own views, and I even went so far, in a private letter to Lord Granville, as to say that I considered that English interests would be sacrificed if this occasion was not taken to ensure the continuance of the European Commission of the Danube. From this time forward until, and after the meeting of the London Conference, my relations with the Foreign of five were of the most frequent and satisfactory character. All matters connected with the Danube were constantly referred to me by the Government, and I attended meetings of the Committee of the Cabinet which was considering the Danube questions in relation to the Conference. My services were privately acknowledged in a most gratifying manner by Lord Granville and by other members of the Cabinet. I was in constant communication with the different Ambassadors, and the special Plenipotentiaries sent over to this country for the Conference. So constant and intimate were these consultations that I have been with Lord Granville at midnight and gone from him to the Austrian Ambassador, and had to knock up the Plenipotentiaries from their rest to discuss matters with them. In fact, there was a complete transformation scene from my interviews on arrival to the intimate relations with Ministers for weeks afterwards.

Finally, I drafted the Articles of the Treaty which embodied the rules for the maintenance of the Danube control. Unfortunately, my suggestion for perpetuating the control did not reach the Sublime Porte in time to get their assent; this had only been given as to the twelve years to 1883, and it was not thought desirable to delay the meetings of the Conference to get any modification of it. My interviews with Musurus Pasha were of the most friendly nature.

I was rather amused during these conferences by Baron Brunnow, for many years Russian Ambassador in this country, calling me to account for not having got on well with the Russian Commissioner on the Danube. I told him that we always got on excellently; we were the best of friends, but our policy was different.

The Austrian Ambassador, Count Apponyi, was always most friendly and his Hungarian colleague acted cordially with me in everything. These conferences went on till the month of March. After the new Treaty - the Treaty of London - was signed, the time approached for me to leave. Mr. Hammond was kind enough to say that I had done my duty, and done it well. Shortly after my return to the Danube, I had the satisfaction of receiving the announcement that Her Majesty had been pleased to make me a Companion of the Bath.

While I was in England, having now brought matters to a satisfactory conclusion, - I had considered that I should now return to my military duty, for I was already suffering loss of promotion through my continued residence on the Danube, and yet I had been unwilling to leave that work until I could consider it at an end. The Inspector General of Fortifications had much discussion with me as to the best man to succeed me on the Danube, and finally, Col. Gordon R.E., of Chinese fame, was recommended for the post. Consequently, early in June, I received an intimation that he would be appointed, and I recommended that he should come out some months before I left, in order that he might be thoroughly initiated into the various complicated arrangements that existed.

As my time was drawing to an end, it was not desirable to keep my family out there through the heat of the summer, so, early in June, I sent my wife and children home to England. I remained behind with my Private Secretary. During the summer I went down to Constantinople to see Sir. Henry Elliot and to discuss future matters with him, and on my return, at the request of the Turkish Government, I met Hartley at Varna to consider with him the improvement of that harbour. From thence we went up to Shumla, where we were exceedingly well received by the Governor, who gave a review of the Turkish troops there in our honour. This was extremely interesting to us who had been with the Turkish Contingent 15 years before. We were both struck with the improved character of the troops and especially by their having reverted to a uniform more consonant to their habits and appearance; that of the zouave dress, instead of the European trousers which they had been

forced to wear during the period in which we knew them. We saw an exceedingly fine body of men, 15,000 strong, march past and the scene was a splendid one. From Shumla we went to Rustchuk, and thence made our way back to Galatz.

At the latter end of October Col. Gordon arrived to take over his Commissionership, and I accompanied him to all the different parts of the Delta. He was a man of extraordinary habits and bearing, whom one could not help liking and appreciating for his simplicity of character and deep religious feeling. He was always smoking and always reading his Bible. He was a man of singular courage and directness but also of singular views, very difficult to get on with.

Although we were perfectly good friends and never had a difference, I could see that there were troublous times in store for those who had to work under him on the Danube. I had prepared, with very great care, a memorandum of some hundred pages, giving him a detailed explanation of every question that would come up for his consideration. I was anxious that things should go on as they had been, but I found that his views were not in favour of English predominance. My object had always been to ensure this predominance and I had succeeded. It was an influence which was for the good of all countries, for, although we took the lead in the work, we did not arrogate to ourselves any of the advantages. It was by ensuring English influence and direction that we had things done honestly and well, and that was a matter which I considered of primary importance in everything connected with this international work.

One of the last things I did as Commissioner, was to approve of some important works at the head of the Delta. The shore had been forming at the point where the Kilia and Toultscha branches separated, and it was decided, on the proposition of Sir Charles Hartley and on my recommendation, that a similar class of works to that which had succeeded so well in the lower parts of the river should be started there. But the mass of water was so large that there was some anxiety felt as to whether the works would produce the same effect. I may here say, that these works proved entirely successful and produced a fine, broad, deep channel, which prevented more water from being turned into the Kilia branch.

In December I relinquished the Commissionership which I had held for over 15 years, and received the most gratifying testimony from all sides, of the appreciation of my own countrymen and of the employees of the Commission, as to the share I had had in the generally successful results of our labours. I received a very handsome silver centre-piece for the table, from the English residents on the Danube, and a silver cup from the employees of the Commission. It was very painful to me to say "good-bye" to the Danube.

There was one service which I was glad to render to the English community at Galatz which was, I think, an important one. During the whole of my 15 years residence I had given them in my house the advantage of Sunday services. When possible I obtained visits from clergymen and even from two Bishops of Gibraltar, but until within the last three years I had always held the services myself twice every Sunday. During these last three years I had succeeded in rallying the English to subscribe a stipend for a clergyman to come and reside on the Danube, and to visit the different centres of Sulina, Kustendji, and Galatz at regular periods during the year. The Revd. C. La Mothe had come out from England for this purpose, and remained a certain number of weeks at each place. This had given to the English communities at these places an opportunity for religious observances such as they had never enjoyed before. At Sulina Sir Charles Hartley, who warmly seconded me in these efforts, had, with my help, obtained funds to build a church, which was consecrated in due form by Bishop Harris of Gibraltar.

On my way home I visited Vienna and Berlin. At the latter place I had hoped to make the acquaintance of Prince Bismarck. My German colleague, Baron Radowitz, assured me that the Prince would be glad to see me; however I was unsuccessful in this. While I was in Berlin there was much anxiety on account of the dangerous illness of the Prince of Wales, but to our great relief we heard that this had taken a favourable turn. On continuing my journey I travelled in the same carriage with Capt. Goodenough, R.N., his wife and two little boys. I had known his brother as a military apache at Vienna. He himself, poor man, was killed by the natives of the South Sea Islands not long after this.

On arriving in England I found my wife and children in lodgings in Gloucester Place, the poor children being ill with measles. I was able to assist in the grand Thanksgiving Service in St. Paul's for the recovery of the Prince. It was a very imposing ceremony. I was very well received both at the Foreign Office and at the War Office. I asked to be sent to Chatham for a few months, in order that, after my long diplomatic service on the Danube, I might have an opportunity of going through the new system of drill which had been adopted since I was a youngster.

This request was granted, and in January 1872 I went down to Chatham as a Lt. Col. attached to the Battalion. Col. Galwey and Col. John Grant gave me a hearty welcome, and I took a house for six months at Boley Hill, Rochester, where I could bring my family, and which we found very comfortable.

While I was doing duty with the Battalion at Chatham the General commanding the District arranged with the Earl of Darnley to have a sham fight in Cobham Park. It was the first and only fight of the kind that had ever taken place there, and, as Col. Grant was away, I was in command of the Engineer Battalion which formed part of the attacking

force. (A singular coincidence as the place was so well known to me). we had a lovely day in April for the operations, which were interesting.

In the same month I was offered the post of Commanding Engineer at Sheerness, but I thought that, after our long sojourn on the Danube where my children had rather suffered from the aguish climate, it was undesirable to take up a similar position at the mouth of the Medway and Thames, and I therefore declined it.

In that month I had the sorrow of losing my much beloved and venerated godfather, Sir John Bligh, whose friendship had, all my life, been a great happiness to me.

In May I was appointed Commanding Engineer in South Wales, my headquarters being at Pembroke Dock. Leaving my family at Bole Hill, I went down to Pembroke to take command, and to try to find a house. This was no easy matter; I scoured the country in all directions, and in the course of my explorations I visited 20 houses, but, although I saw one or two that suited, there was always some obstacle; at last however, I secured a house called Poyston, about three miles from Haverford-west, the property of Mr. Owen of Withybush. He acted most courteously and generously in making arrangements with me. He granted me a lease which enabled me to be quit of the house at any time within six months, a matter of great importance to me.

It was a great happiness again to have a home of our own in England. I had a good pair of horses and a carriage. As a matter of fact Poyston was not a very convenient place for me to live in because my office was at Pembroke Dock, and every day I had to drive to Haverfordwest, take train to Newlands, and the ferry across to Pembroke Dock. I always used to carry my lunch with me, and, as a rule, I suppose that I went down to my office 5 days a week. Still, this was better than having a smaller house in the town of Pembroke, and I never regretted having taken Poyston. We had a great many friends all round, and were kindly received by the County people beyond the Cleddau. That side of Pembrokeshire is quite cut off from the other side by the Haven, and by the Cleddau which can only be passed by bridges or ferries at long intervals.

On the eastern side of this boundary Lord Cawdor used to invite us to stay at Stackpole, I and the Saurins at Orielson, But our communications with them were not so frequent as with the various houses on the western side of the Cleddau. Mr. Scourfield of Williamston was particularly hospitable, as were the Owens, Massys, Barhams, Higgons, Phillipses and Admiral Stokes. There is not much to be said of this part of my life, except that we had this pleasant neighbourhood, and I used to have a great deal of good shooting, croquet and billiards.

Round Haverfordwest, there is an English speaking population: the district used to be called "Little England beyond Wales", the people were descended from Lollard settlers. I must say that, nevertheless I often had difficulty in understanding my coachman, who spoke a very curious lingo. Driving into Cardiganshire, I found that he could not make himself understood by the people, as he could speak no Welsh, although he was a man of that neighbourhood, we had difficulty in finding our way after we got beyond the English speaking boundary.

In the summer of 1873, my wife and Edith had gone to town for medical advice and stayed there for some weeks. I, with Gina and Frank, paid a visit to some very old friends in Cardiganshire, Mr. Brenchley and his wife. I had known Mr. Brenchley when we were boys together. At Glaneirw, Mr. Brenchley's place, I found myself in touch with several old friends whom I had known in former years in Kent. We were near Tiveyside, a valley dividing Cardiganshire from Pembrokeshire. The Tivey flows between high, wooded grounds on either side: there I saw for the first time, an otter hunt - an exciting and interesting sport. I also met there an officer whom I had known in the Turkish Contingent, a Capt. Parry, who was living close by. We had a very pleasant time with the Brenchleys, returning via Carmarthen.

CHAPTER XI

The Suez Canal

At this time I received an intimation from the Government that they wished me to become a member of the International Commission which was to be assembled at Constantinople, for the purpose of solving the difficulty that had arisen with the Suez Canal Company in reference to the tonnage on which their dues ought to be collected on vessels passing through the Canal. The Suez Canal had always been a work that interested me very much. It was analogous to that which I had carried out on the Danube. Our work was that of making the river Navigable, whilst theirs was to cut a new channel for the passage of ships. I had been from time to time, consulted by the Board of Trade about these difficulties and knew that Mr. Farrer, the Secretary of the Board of Trade, had always advocated my being employed on this duty.

I accepted the offer and the War Office arranged for the performance of my duties during my absence. In August I got definite orders to repair to Constantinople. My own wish had been that I should be allowed to go out and visit the Canal, taking Gibraltar on my way, and from the Canal, which I thought it would be most useful to see, make my way up to Constantinople. But the Foreign Office thought that my presence on the Bosphorous was required immediately and I had to get there as speedily as possible.

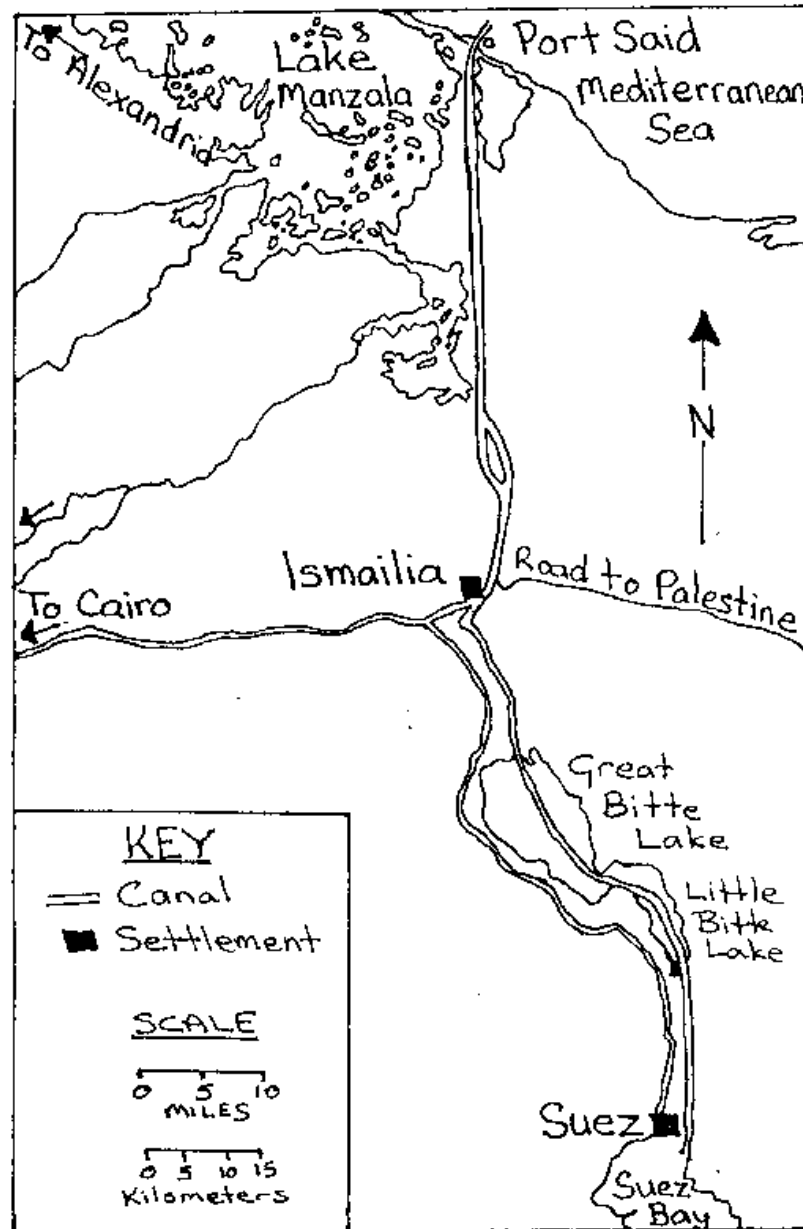
I first of all, visited my wife and Edith at Eastbourne, whither they had gone from London, and then I started for Constantinople.

As I had to go direct, I wished to travel via Vienna, and my old haunts on the Danube, but, unfortunately cholera at that time prevailed in Vienna, and I should have been put in quarantine on arriving at Constantinople. I therefore took the route via Berlin, Cracow, and Odessa, whence I took boat for Constantinople, which I reached in six days from the time of leaving England. I was very warmly received by Sir Henry Elliot, under whom I had served before, and by degrees, my various colleagues arrived.

This Suez Canal Commission was a much larger one than the European Commission of the Danube had been, for every Maritime Power was represented on it. There were in all twelve countries, and most of them had two if not three Commissioners, so that altogether we were a body of twenty-four. We did not really hold our first meeting until some six weeks after I arrived, which made me regret the haste with which I had been hurried out, thus depriving me of the opportunity of seeing the Canal itself and its mode of working. It would have been of great value in our subsequent negotiations, had I been able to do this. However, one advantage there was in being on the spot so early, that I became acquainted with my colleagues by degrees and learned their views. We held our first meeting on 6th October, and were presided over by Edhem

Pasha, who subsequently became Grand Vizier, our meetings being held in the Public Offices of Seraglio Point.

Before meeting, one of the difficulties which I had to treat of with the Ambassador, was the tenor of the instructions given to the Turkish Delegates, which seemed entirely to frustrate the objects we had in view of settling the Suez Canal question as well as general questions of Tonnage.



Map of the Suez Canal region visited by Stokes

The Turkish Instructions had been drafted in such a crafty manner, and at such great length, that the principal point of the matter we had come together to discuss, was (probably intentionally) lost.

It appeared to me (and I was able to carry some of my colleagues with me in the opinion) that such a large Commission as we were, required certain rules as to the order of debate-rules under which questions once decided should be considered definitely settled and not be gone back upon on future occasions. This view was impressed on my mind by my experience on the Danube. Although we were a smaller body, we found such regulations very valuable and I therefore framed a similar set for the guidance of our discussions in this big Commission. The importance of these rules was manifested by the great opposition that was raised on points determining the definite nature of our decisions.

They proved of the greatest use to us in the subsequent discussions. With regard to the order of our discussions, it was decided that we should first of all determine what was the proper tonnage on which the dues paid by vessels should be levied. The whole difference had arisen on the claim made by the Suez Canal Company to levy the very heavy dues granted by their concession on the gross tonnage of vessels. They had begun by levying on the nett tonnage, but after three years they changed their system; in fact M. de Lesseps had been very much attacked by his shareholders, some of whom maintained that his concession entitled him to levy on a ton, which they considered to be a cubic metro. This would have inflicted a tremendous tax on shipping, and was not recognized in any country as the taxable tonnage. M. de Lesseps thought to shirk this conclusion of his shareholders by taxing the gross tonnage, which really meant increasing the dues he was levying by about 50 percent. That sudden change had of course made the shipowners cry out. The question had been decided in the courts of France, first of all in favour of the shipowners; but the judgement was reversed on appeal in favour of the Company. The English Shipowners and others addressed their Governments; the Governments had referred the matter to the Sultan, as it was admitted that, having granted the Concession under which the dues were levied, he alone had the right to decide on what tonnage they were to be levied. This was admitted by both parties for the dispute. The Sultan, however, declared that he himself was doubtful as to what the correct tonnage should be, and therefore this International Commission was assembled in order to advise him as to what was meant by the tonnage in the Concession. The Commission decided in the first instance to examine the general question of tonnage and then to proceed to decide on its application to the Suez Canal.

In my Danube experience, where we had been obliged to tax all vessels equally, I had learnt that hardly any two countries had the same system of measuring the tonnage of their ships, and we had been obliged to adopt the system which was known as the Danube Rule. This was really a modification of the English Rule, which the Board of Trade wished to

introduce, but which they had not succeeded in passing into law. The great question to be determined was, first, how a vessel should be measured for its gross tonnage, and, secondly, what deduction should be made for the nett tonnage, that is to say, the carrying capacity of a ship which was considered to be the proper tonnage on which she should pay dues.

The first question, therefore, that the International Commission thought it best to decide was, "What is the gross tonnage of a vessel?". This had been, in the first half of the century, generally determined by rough measurements, taking the length, breadth, and depth of a vessel as the determining factors. The result of such measurement was, that vessels were built on a form designed to give a far larger carrying capacity than the multiplication of those factors would show as being her tonnage. Such vessels were frequently simply floating coffins, as all attempts to improve the shape of the vessel for navigating purposes were frustrated by this desire to obtain an amount of tonnage not represented in the certificates.

In the early fifties Mr Moorsom had pressed upon the Government the desirability of ascertaining the tonnage of a vessel by accurately measuring, on mathematical principles, its interior capacity and, in 1854, Parliament had passed the "Manchester Shipping Act", in which this principle was adopted. It consisted in taking measurements of the interior of a ship's hull, giving the number of cubic feet comprised in it.

Although England had adopted these rules, other nations still clung to the old rule-of-thumb measurement, and therefore, the tonnage of their vessels differed very considerably from the tonnage of English ships, had taken account of the form of the vessel.

This system, which exactly followed the shape of the vessel, encouraged builders to give the ships the form best adapted to navigation, and to ensure safety, as well as speed.

I have previously touched on this subject in connection with the tonnage of vessels frequenting the Danube, and pointed out that the Danube Commission had recommended that an International Agreement should be arrived at by which the vessels of all nations should be measured according to the same rules. A practical means of putting this into effect had now arisen in connection with the Suez Canal dues. Happily, one of the French delegates on this tonnage commission was also a member of the Danube Commission and, therefore, was able to corroborate the statements made by me as to the inequalities of the various systems.

In the discussion of this question I was warmly supported by Capt. Jansen the Delegate of Holland, Capt. Mattei the Delegate of Italy and less usefully by the German, Austrian, Spanish, Swedish, Belgian, and Greek delegates: but the Russian and second French delegates apparently

feared that the Moorsom system might act detrimentally to the interests of the Suez Canal.

After a lengthy discussion, however, this system of measuring tonnage was recognized as so obviously sound, that the International Commission adopted the Moorsom rules as those which ought to prevail among all Maritime nations. The principal struggle between M. de Lesseps' supporters and the rest of the delegates then lay in defining what was the nett tonnage of a ship. The Lesseps' advocates endeavoured to obtain a resolution that what they called the utilizable capacity of a ship should be the nett tonnage. The majority of the Commission, however, inclined to what had come to be defined as the Danube Rule. Really, the Danube Rule was a modification of the English law, which the Board of Trade had recommended the Danube Commission to adopt, as a fair international system for levying dues on the ships frequenting that river. The mode of fixing the nett tonnage under the English law of 1854, which was still in force, consisted in making a deduction for engine space, coal bunkers etc, on a very rude calculation based on a percentage of the ship's gross tonnage, without taking any account of the actual space occupied by the machinery etc. The Danube Rule, on the contrary, took account of the actual space occupied, and was, therefore a much more fair and accurate indication of the balance of tonnage left for the conveyance of cargo and passengers. Even this rule was considered by many Commissioners, as pressing hardly on a vessel in her payment of canal and dock dues, and they made further deductions, representing the space occupied by the officers and crew. Consequently, between M. de Lesseps' supporters and the rest of the Commission, the question of the utilizable capacity became so keen that the French and Russian Commissioners withdrew from the discussions. The great majority of the Commission, however, continued their labours and arrived at the nett tonnage as sketched above. The view that I took of the whole position was this, - and my colleague, Sir Philip Francis, went heartily with me in it - that the Commission while fixing the legal tonnage, which ought to be the rule in the future for levying dues on the Suez Canal, should not endeavour to push those rules to the extremity of ruining the Company. There were Commissioners who had been my strenuous supporters in carrying these rules, who desired to proclaim them as the law, and to insist that judgment should be pronounced on the Company to the effect that, having in the past illegally levied dues far in excess of those to which they were entitled, they should be compelled to make a refund. There is no doubt that judgment to that effect formally passed would have paralysed the Suez Canal Company, and by making it impossible for its finances to suffice for its liabilities, would have led to bankruptcy. We felt that, however much M. de Lesseps might have endeavoured to create a work favourable to France as against the world, still he had carried out a very grand scheme, and we thought the rest of the world ought to acknowledge this, and not press its strong position on this tonnage question to the point of ruining the undertaking. I therefore formed a compromise, which I hoped would be acceptable to all parties,

and would enable the company to continue to carry on the administration of a work which had been of so much advantage to commerce generally.

The effect of the judgment, in the sense that the Company were only entitled to levy on the nett tonnage, would not only have obliged them to refund a very large sum, but would have furnished them with a revenue insufficient for their annual expenditure. The concession to the Company entitled them to levy ten francs a ton on the tonnage of each vessel. The effect of levying that ten francs a ton on the gross tonnage, which of course M. de Lesseps had adopted, was equivalent to levying fifteen francs a ton on the nett tonnage. My proposal was that they should be allowed to levy a surtax of three and a half francs a ton, in addition to the ten francs, and that that surtax should be reduced as the full amount of tonnage passing through the Canal increased, in certain defined proportions so as to give them an assured yearly revenue. This proposal led to the French and Russian Commissioners returning to the discussions, and disposed the Turkish Government, which had to pronounce eventually on the question, to accept the decisions of the Commission more readily. A great effort was made by the French Commissioners, supported by the Turkish Government, to get the surtax made up to five francs, but strenuously opposed that modification of the proposal, because it would have virtually given the dues on the gross tonnage, and so would have admitted that the Company had been right in what they had done, which we could not accept. Eventually, the compromise was accepted and I was requested to prepare the Report in which the results of the Commission's proceedings were embodied. In it I was assisted by M. Girette, who represented the Messageries Maritimes, which ensured the French text being correct. The Sultan adopted our Report as defining the Tonnage Law of Turkey, and the Suez Canal Company was called upon to accept these conditions, which were ordered to take effect from the 1st of April 1874.

This result of the Commission was very distasteful to some of the delegates who had warmly supported me in the tonnage question, and I am afraid that they were rather disposed to blame me for having arrested the judgment which they were so anxious to pronounce upon the Company; but I believe that I rendered a distinct service to European interests in providing this escape from a very disagreeable dilemma. I consulted Sir Henry Elliot, H.M. Ambassador, on every step I took and met with his cordial concurrence and support, especially in all the dealings with the Sublime Porte, and I had the satisfaction of meeting with the full approval of Her Majesty's Government.

The following is a copy of the despatch which Sir Henry Elliot wrote to the Government on the conclusion of their labours.

22.December. 1873

In transmitting to your Lordship the accompanying reports from Her Majesty's Delegates on the Tonnage Commission, I am enclosing the agreement on the question of the Suez Canal dues which has been unanimously adopted by the whole of the Members. I must take the opportunity of bearing witness to the energy and ability shown by those gentlemen in their discharge of an extremely difficult duty.

Col. Stokes' complete mastery of the subject, his tact and conciliatory disposition, have been freely recognized by all his colleagues, and he found a most efficient Coadjutor in Sir Philip Francis.

Enough of the proceedings of the Commission is already known, to have removed the impression so industriously circulated by M. de Lesseps, of the hostility of England to the Canal. The agreement that has been come to is known to have been proposed by Her Majesty's Delegates almost exactly in its present form six weeks ago and its liberality is generally recognized, although, probably on account of the important events then passing in France, the French delegates were not authorized to entertain it.

Foreign Office. January 29th. 1874.

Sir,

I have received your despatch signed by yourself and Sir P. Francis, No.43. 23rd.ult. enclosing a report of the proceedings of the International Tonnage Commission at Constantinople, and I have now the pleasure, at the conclusion of the labours of the Commission, in expressing to you the sense entertained by H.M. Government of the manner in which the British Representatives have discharged their difficult and delicate duties upon the occasion in question.

(Signed)

Granville.

There was very general satisfaction felt by the Turkish Government at this question having been so satisfactorily arranged and all the Governments concerned approved.

The Commission did not separate without banquets and entertainments, given by the Turkish authorities, and decorations were freely bestowed upon the members of the Commission. For my own part, having already one Class of the order of the Medjideh, the Government were able to allow me to accept promotion to the Second Class. Our discussions had

come to an end on 13th. December, but there was much to be done after that in bringing to a close the details of our work, and in the mean time, H.M. Government sent me orders to visit the Suez Canal and report fully upon all its conditions, and on the administration there. I dined at the Embassy on Christmas Day, and on the 29th., had the pleasure of listening to a performance of the "Messiah" at the English Crimean Memorial Church, of which my old friend Canon Curtis was the incumbent. Miss Kate Ranken and Mr. James, of the Royal Navy, took part in the performance.

All through my stay at Constantinople and Therapia, where I principally lived at the Hotel Petala, I had met with the greatest kindness and hospitality from Sir Henry and Lady Elliot, and I dined frequently with them. In the evenings Sir Henry and I used to have hardly contested games of chess. We were very equal in strength and as I had at the same time on me the great strain and labour of the discussions which involved very much calculation, after a time I was obliged to say that I could not carry on these desperate contests at the same time with my official labours.

On the 1st. January 1874, I embarked on an Austrian - Lloyd's steamer, in a snowstorm. In fact, the weather had been very bad in Constantinople for some two or three weeks. We touched at Gallipoli and Mitylene and anchored at Smyrna. We sailed again on the 4th. and after a rough passage, reached Alexandria at dark on the 8th. I at once went up to Cairo and was met by my old friend Col. Stanton Her Majesty's Consul General in Egypt who took me to his house where I stayed with him till the 2nd. February. I had a pleasant time at Cairo. Stanton held a very influential position, was a great favourite with the Khedive and was much looked up to by all the Egyptian officials and by Society in general. I was introduced to the Khedive, Ismail, and made the acquaintance of the Grand Vizier, Nubar Pasha, and of his rival, Cherif Pasha. I called also upon Tewfik Pasha, the Khedive's eldest son, who eventually succeeded him; and made the acquaintance of several Englishmen of note, viz, Admiral Lord Clarence Paget, Professor Owen, the great comparative anatomist, also, Karl Haag, the artist, and Dr. Bake, the traveller. Soon after I reached Cairo, the races came off, I did not care much about fourth rate races such as these were, and besides, I wanted to see the Pyramids, but until they were over, I could not get the Stantons to think of anything else. The Dromedary races, however, were amusing, and remarkable not so much for the speed of the animals as for the antics of the riders.

Although I was nearly four weeks in Cairo, I never, at that time, got to the Pyramids, as the weather became very bad, and I myself was out of health. I had the pleasure of visiting Karl Haag's studio, where he showed me some splendid sketches of camels which were, at that time, his special study. He also pointed out to me that in that climate the shadows as seen on the sand were perfectly blue, so blue that he dare not show

them in colour as they really were, or it would never have been believed that they were true to nature. The sand, it would seem, reflected the brilliant colour of the sky, as I realized myself on going out. I visited all the buildings of interest in and around Cairo, and had the pleasure of frequently going to the Opera with the Stantons. The Opera was one of Ismail Pasha's great extravagances. It was said that it cost him £100,000 a year, as he took care always to have excellent artistes from Europe, and the properties and costumes were of a most elaborate character.

On the 2nd. February I started for the Suez Canal, reaching Ismailia by train and proceeding thence to Port Said in a steam-launch. I examined the works and then, on the 4th embarked on the S.S. "Duke of Sutherland". we did not reach Suez till sundown on the 6th. I landed and went to the old P. and O. hotel, where I had the misfortune to fall downstairs. My foot tripped on the top step and there being no banister, I went head foremost to the bottom, striking my knee against several steps. I was very much hurt and had to lie up at Suez till the 2nd. March.

I received much kindness from Admiral Willoughby, who was in charge of the East India Co's Barracks at Suez and from Mr. West, Her Majesty's Consul, and many others. Whilst I was laid up there, amongst other visitors, Duke William of Wurtemberg called upon me, and I had also the pleasure of seeing Col. Gordon, who had succeeded me as Commissioner on the Danube. He was on his way to the Soudan to take up the government of that country. He called upon me on the 21st. February and we had long talks over my report and his own future prospects. He came at night after I was in bed, and next morning before I was up he appeared again and then left for Suakim to make his way to the Nile.

On the 2nd. March I steamed in a launch to Ismailia, as the guest of Ferdinand de Lesseps, and was put up by him in his pretty chalet on the shore of Lake Timsah. I stayed there only one night and my host showed me all the points of interest about Ismailia, principally the Waterworks, which had been established at the extremity of the Canal, bringing the Nile water from Cairo, whence it is driven by forcing-pumps through a long pipe to Port Said, a distance of some fifty miles.

Round these waterworks, which were superintended by M. Pierre, who had married an English wife, the Nile water had deposited successive layers upon the desert sand, and had formed a most fertile garden in which fruits and flowers of all kinds grew most luxuriantly. Beyond it was a large plantation of Filao trees, which had become, in the 15 or 16 years since its formation, a thick tangled wood.

I was able to see how the process of forming this soil over the desert gradually increased the fertility. The first flooding of the Nile water over the sand enabled the vegetation to begin; with one or two layers strawberries would grow, and as the successive layers formed a greater depth of soil, plants of stronger roots and requiring still greater depth

could be planted: thus by constant irrigation, the mud-bearing water of the Nile, made a sufficient depth of soil to grow vegetables, and eventually trees.

At the Company's offices, I was interested in seeing a section taken through the old bottom of the Great Bitter Lake before the sea was again let into it in filling the Canal. This section some eight feet in depth showed the successive layers of salt deposited at the bottom in the ages during which the Lakes were gradually drying up.

I made the acquaintance, amongst others, of M. Ruysnaer, the Dutch Consul General, who had been a great supporter of M. de Lesseps in all his difficulties with the Governments. From Lesseps himself I met with the greatest attention and courtesy. At our first interview (it was the first time I had ever met him) I rather astonished him by saying, in reply to an observation he had made upon the hostility of the English Government to his designs, that I thought Lord Palmerston had been his best friend.

How could that be", he said, "when he opposed me in every direction?"

"Still, Sir," I replied, "the fact is, that the opposition he offered you delayed the execution of the work of the Canal to a period when it was possible for it to become a success. If it had been opened, as you hoped, in four or five years after the concession was granted, it would have been a great failure, for you would have had no vessels to navigate it. Happily for you, before the date on which you opened it, compound engines had been discovered, and vessels fitted with them pass through the Canal in great numbers. If you had begun to navigate the Canal before, you would have had no trade, because sailing vessels, on which you counted, could not use it. Palmerston was your best friend," I repeated, whereupon he laughed.

I had reason to feel that M. de Lesseps recognized that my action at Constantinople had been really friendly to the Canal and therefore treated me with great consideration. I did not, however, meet with the same courtesy from his wife, who attacked me violently at table, before numerous guests, for the injury done to the Canal Company by the Governments; so much so that M. de Lesseps himself had to come to my rescue!

The following day, I was suffering from one of the bad headaches which used frequently to attack me, and the train from Suez to Ismailia, by which I was going on to Cairo, had been blocked by the sand drifted across the railway and was six hours late: during the greater part of which time I had to endure a very warm discussion with M. de Lesseps and M. Ruysnaer, on the general question of the difficulties of the Suez Canal with the Powers; but being wretchedly ill, I escaped from it as soon as I could, to lie down at the station and wait for the train to come in.

On reaching Cairo I stayed at Shepherd's Hotel, which in those days was in its old form and style, but which has since been re-built and spoilt to a great extent. Here, at last, I was able to visit the Pyramids with the Stantons, but, owing to the injury to my knee, from which I had only partially recovered, I was unable to do any climbing or to attempt to ascend them.

I only remained in Cairo four days, and left for Alexandria taking passage on the P. and O. steamer "Sumatra", where I again met Dr. Blake. I had seen him some weeks before in Cairo, on his way to Mount Sinai, whither he was going in order to verify a theory concerning the wanderings of the children of Israel. He held, that the miraculous features of the deliverance were due to purely natural causes. As regards the passage of the Red Sea, he maintained that there was a reef across the Gulf of Akaba, a narrow arm of the sea, on which a strong easterly wind would lower the level of the water, and leave a really dry passage across, and also, that the wall of water "on the right hand and on the left", meant merely that there was deep water on the side of the reef on which they passed over, and that when the Egyptians followed, a westerly wind blew, which brought back the waters and drowned them. A further point was, that "the pillar of fire by night and the pillar of cloud by day" was due to volcanic fire and smoke of Mount Sinai. He told me when I met him on the "Sumatra", that he could not be quite positive about the reef across the Gulf, but that he made his way up to Mount Sinai, and as he went, there was, in the distance, all the appearance of volcanic action which he was expecting, and also that he found on the slopes of the hill, bones and relics of sacrifices which had been offered there. He made his way up but did not discover the crater, he was nevertheless thoroughly convinced that his theory was the correct one!

We landed at Brindisi on the 13th. March, and I thence took train to Naples. I had the good fortune at Brindisi, to fall in with Col. Brooke, a son of Rajah Brooke of Borneo. We travelled together, stayed together at Naples and visited Pompeii. He was a very interesting companion, as he had been on the staff of Lord Napier of Magdala (Sir Robert Napier as he then was) in the expedition to China, in which, with the French army, we took the Summer Palace. In going through the Palace he said, the French were looting it in all directions, the English were not so keen, and a Frenchman came up to him with a very heavy and splendid vase, and asked him whether it was ormulu or gold. Col. Brooke thought it must be ormulu and said so, whereupon the Frenchman dropped it and ran off. Brooke then lifted it himself, and found from the weight that it must be gold, so he took it into camp to Sir Robert Napier, where it was put into the Prize Chest!!

I met Col. Brooke more than once after that. He was killed at the Siege of Kandahar in 1878.

From Naples I went to Rome and there had the pleasure of meeting again two old colleagues. One was the Marquis D'Aste, who had shared my policy in the Danube Commission 17 years before. We were delighted to meet again and he entertained me most hospitably on two different occasions. -- The other was Capt. Mattei, my recent Italian colleague in the Tonnage Commission. Capt. Mattei had promised me that if I came to Rome, he would have great pleasure in acting as my cicerone. He was thoroughly well acquainted with every part of the city, and was a most interesting companion.

My stay there was necessarily so short that I begged him to show me principally Ancient Rome, with which my youthful studies had made me more acquainted than with its modern history. The reason that I was rather pressed for time was that I had heard from my brother Frank, whom I had not seen for 14 years, that he was on his way home from Australia, and would reach Venice about the 22nd. of the month.

As I wished to have a day or two at Florence on my way to Venice, I could only devote four days to Rome. This time, I turned to excellent account with Capt. Mattei in visiting all the most interesting parts, but I did not attempt any of the beautiful galleries, to obtain a thorough knowledge of which, one ought to spend many weeks there. I here made the acquaintance of Sir Augustus Paget, Her Majesty's Minister, and saw Lord Hammond, my old chief at the Foreign Office, who was then in Rome.

From Rome I went on to Florence where I had a delightful day in the splendid galleries of the Pitti Palace, pushing on to Venice the same night. Next morning I went on board the P. and O. steamer then arriving, and found my brother. With him were Mr. and Mrs. Grant Thorold. We did not stay in Venice but made our way to Milan where we stopped a night, and went over the Cathedral.

Going on to Paris, I renewed my acquaintance with Lord Lyons, who had been Ambassador at Constantinople while I was Danube Commissioner, and with whom I was subsequently to have much to do. During my absence from England on the Suez Canal question, to settle which I was sent out by Lord Granville, there had been a change of Ministry, and on arriving in London on the 27th. March, I found that Lord Derby had become Foreign Secretary and was therefore my chief at the Foreign Office. I had feared that, having completed the International tonnage work under Lord Granville, it might be detrimental to me to come under another Secretary of State, who might not take the same interest in the matter as Lord Granville had done; but I was gratified to find that Lord Derby received me very well, and had not forgotten the incidents in which he had so materially aided me in 1867, when I appealed to him for assistance in obtaining financial resources for the Danube Commission.

On the 1st. April M. de Lesseps had been directed to put in force the new arrangements made at Constantinople. He had formally protested against them and declared that he would not act on them. Lord Derby consulted me on the subject and I recommended that a military force should be sent from Cairo, to compel obedience to the decision of the Sultan, which had been given in accordance with the recommendations of the International Commission. This advice was adopted and General Stone, an American, commanding the Egyptian Troops, was directed to take possession of the Canal. As soon as M. de Lesseps saw that he could no longer defy the authorities, he gave the necessary orders for compliance. At the same time, he lodged a strong protest against the Sultan and the Khedive, and held them responsible for the losses which the Canal Company might sustain in consequence of the decision of the Sultan. This state of things led the Foreign Office to desire my constant presence in London, in order to advise upon the successive phases of the difficulties as they arose.

It being Easter time, I got permission to absent myself for a few days from London, and went down to Poyston, with my brother, where we arrived in the early morning of Good Friday. After a fortnight's stay at home, I returned to town and remained there for several months in constant attendance at the Foreign office.

I took up my quarters at Lane's Hotel, where my brother was also staying, which enabled me to see more of him in his short visit to England than I could otherwise have done.

One of the first things I did on my return was to complete my Report on the Suez Canal, which I submitted to Lord Derby. In this report I emphatically condemned the policy of the Company in prolonging their piers in order to maintain depth - a project which I am glad to say they very shortly after this, entirely abandoned.

Many difficult questions in connection with the Suez Canal were constantly arising. Shipowners desired to recover from the Company the excess dues which had been charged since 1872 upon the gross instead of upon the nett tonnage. I endeavoured to impress upon Lord Derby that it would be better policy to restrain English shipowners from action of this kind, as it would have a ruinous effect upon the Suez Canal Company to claim these arrears. In fact, the same motives were valid against such action as those which had induced me, with the consent of the Government, to bring about the compromise of a surtax. To have granted the shipowners' request would have been to stultify our action in that Commission. Lord Derby accepted my views and the various demands of shipowners to bring about the refund from the Suez Canal Company, were steadily resisted.

There were many technical points to settle with regard to the application of the new tonnage rules, concerning which constant communication with the Board of Trade and surveyors was necessary. There were also

proposals as to the necessity for transferring the administration and maintenance of the Canal from the hands of a private company to the direction of a public authority, a transfer, the advantage of which I pointed out in a long memorandum which I addressed to Lord Derby. I also had to report upon various questions connected with the finance of the Company and I urged Lord Derby to insist on the Admiralty making surveys, to enable me to advise upon the question of the maintenance of the depth of the entry, which appeared to be constantly menacing the passage of vessels owing to the shoals formed at the Port Said end. M. de Lesseps' protest, of itself, gave rise to constant correspondence with Foreign Powers on the subject of the position of the Suez Canal Company, upon all of which I had to advise the Government. In fact, my despatches were incorporated in the text of the replies sent. Another source of trouble was the constant complaint made by the owners of English ships against the action of the Suez Canal officers in the application, forced upon them, of the rules we had framed at Constantinople. The Board of Trade had adopted special forms of certificate for ships going through the Canal, and after they had been issued and had come into operation, the Canal Company gradually grew accustomed to accepting them as final and authoritative: but, until that period of tranquility arrived, complaints were incessant and were all referred to me for treatment.

On the 10th October I received through Lord Derby the offer of a Knighthood. As he had asked for a K.C.B. for me, I told him that I preferred waiting for a vacancy, and declined the lower honour.

During the year 1874 I had been able to pay frequent visits to Poyston and had seen my brother Frank take his departure for Australia via North America. He had only spent two months in England and was back again in Adelaide within the six months which he had allotted to himself for his run home, winning thus a bet of a new hat which he had made before starting! !

During the autumn of 1874 I was able to make arrangements for my son, Arthur, to go out to Ceylon as a coffee planter; the defect in his mouth having rendered the choice of a profession for him very difficult. To arrange this, I made my first visit to Scotland in order to see Mr. Anderson, a Ceylon planter, who had been recommended to me by Mr. John Buchanan. I took Chester en route in order to see Mr. Buchanan's mother (Pat Robertson Ross' sister) at Backford. She had become Mrs. Bryans by her marriage with the Rector of Backford. At Chester I called upon Bishop Jacobson, who had been a great friend of my brother Edward's at Christ Church, and whose acquaintance I had made there many years before. I had a cordial greeting from the Bishop.

From Chester I made my way to Perth, where my friend Hartley met me at the station and took me to the house of Mr. Conning, whose daughter

was the widow of Hartley's brother. I arranged with Mr. Anderson for Arthur to purchase a share of the Kinloch coffee estate in Ceylon.

From Perth I went on to Old Deer, to make the acquaintance of Dean Ranken, whose daughter's friendship we have enjoyed for many years. I had a hearty welcome there. but stayed only one night, returning the next day to Aberdeen I hence I made my way to Inverness and down the Caledonian Canal to Bannavie where I left the boat as the weather became so bad. The next day I drove over to Ballyhulish, starting the following day by coach at Tyndrum Station. I had a fine day for going through the Glencoe Pass, down Glenfalloch, to Loch Lomond, where I passed the night I took steamer next day to Inversnaid, coached to Loch Katrine, and drove through the Trossachs, arriving in Edinburgh that night. The following day. Moir Darling showed me all the principal points of interest in Edinburgh, and on the next day I returned to London, greatly pleased with my first hasty view of Scotland.

I had to make various financial arrangements for establishing Arthur in Ceylon, and putting my agreement with Mr Anderson on a legal footing.

On the 12th October, I took Arthur on board the "Eldorado", on which he was to make the voyage to Ceylon with the Andersons.

My stay in London on Foreign Office business gave me the opportunity of seeing many of my friends living at easy distance from town, with whom I used to pass my Sundays In this way I kept up my friendship with the Tylers, Pasleys, Cowburns, Smith-Masters, Bakers, Edmeades &c. One particularly interesting acquaintance I made at this time was with Capt. Eads, the American engineer, who had the concession from his Government to open the mouth of the Mississippi This river, although immensely larger than the Danube, had many features resembling those at the mouth of the latter. The great success of our works at Sulina had induced the American Government to ask the opinion of Sir Charles Hartley upon the Mississippi question. He had reported in favour of opening that one of the mouths which the American engineers had considered to be least favourable for improvement. The Government had sent a Commission of Engineers to the mouth of the Danube to see the works there, and they had reported so favourably on the system adopted, that the concession for carrying out works of a similar nature, had been granted to Capt Eads. Capt Eads frequently consulted Hartley on the subject, and appointed him advisory engineer, to aid him in his task during the construction of the Mississippi works. These were eventually carried out entirely on the lines of the Danube works, and resulted in an equally great success in the course of their construction difficulties arose up the river, which were solved by following Sir Charles Hartley's valuable advice for their treatment. It was, therefore, very agreeable to me to meet Capt Eads, who at this time had another great scheme on foot for connecting the Atlantic with the Pacific, not by a canal, but by a ship railway across the Isthmus of Tehuantepec. He had with him a model of

his scheme, of most ingenious construction, but, though a model ship might be got on to a set of rails, the idea was never sufficiently taken up for the construction of a railway to carry ships of 3000 or 4000 tons across the Isthmus.

Another very interesting acquaintance I made at this time was that of Col. Warburton, a great friend of my brother's in Australia, who had achieved the remarkable feat of crossing the desert which separates South Australia proper from the Northern shores, an exploit which had been frequently attempted but never before accomplished. Col. Warburton, on this journey, endured terrible hardships and finally, was carried, more dead than alive, into the habitable parts. He was a fine old gentleman and a pleasant companion.

CHAPTER XII

Chatham (1875 - 1879)

In January 1875, I was appointed Commanding Engineer at Chatham. The Foreign Office, considering that my sole attention to the Suez Canal work was no longer necessary, and that, at such a short distance from London as Chatham, I could give immediate attention to any questions that might arise, H.R.H. the Duke of Cambridge consented to my uniting my functions at the Foreign Office to those of a military nature.

I made all the arrangements for giving up Poyston and moving my family to Chatham, and went down in the middle of February to superintend the move. Unhappily, my dear wife was taken very ill and it was impossible for her to travel. We did not really move till the end of the second week in March, furniture waggons having been waiting for four weeks.

There is not much to be said about these early months at Chatham. They were full of the duties of the Engineer office, and the life there was always bright, and to me, especially agreeable, as I was living so near to all my old friends at Rochester and about Cobham. My poor wife's health was a great anxiety but, after a stay at Ventnor, she returned home considerably better. This illness was the beginning of the dreadful attack which she had two years later. During August I took the children for a fortnight's stay at Cliftonville, near Margate, where they much enjoyed the finest air in England.

There was considerable discussion among the Engineers at that time as to who was to succeed Col. Callwey as Commandant of the School of Military Engineering. My old friend, Sir Lintorn Simmons, was now Inspector General of Fortifications, and as Commanding Engineer at Chatham, I had frequently to see him on business. One day I said to him "Who are we to have to succeed Gallwey?" He kindly said "That would suit you down to the ground, wouldn't it?" I said "Yes, it would, certainly". He replied that he thought it could be managed, and to my great joy, I was appointed.

I always consider this appointment the best in the Corps. It is a most interesting one, as the Commandant has under his supervision the training of all the young officers who, for the first two years of their service, remain at Chatham in order to be instructed in all the various branches of military engineering. The Commandant therefore, has under his eye all this mass of rising talent and sees much of the young oficers who, in the future, are to maintain the honour of the Corps and increase its distinction. He also has under his orders in this interesting task, some of the brightest men of the Corps, who carry on the instruction in all its various branches. To me it has a peculiar charm in its connection with the past, as well as its interest in the future, as I had known well the officer who originally induced the Government to found the School, namely General Sir Charles Pasley, whose son had been one of my greatest

friends. Moreover, this appointment kept me in touch for several years with all the old families in which lay the friendships of my childhood and youth.

It was a great surprise to me to reach this eminent post, which had never entered my wildest dreams.

I took up the appointment on the 1st November 1875, but, by a singular combination of circumstances, was not left quiet very long in my new berth, for, on the 17th., having been to Woolwich on duty, I was met at Strood on my return by an urgent messenger from the Foreign Office, and I at once went back to London to see Lord Tenterden, the Permanent Under Secretary.

A very important telegram had been received from General Stanton, stating that the financial difficulties of the Khedive had become so pressing that he was negotiating with various French capitalists for the sale of his 177,642 Suez Canal Shares, this being about two-fifths of the whole share capital of the Company. The Government were averse to the idea of the whole control of the Canal falling into French hands, Lord Tenterden told me that they wished to consult me on the advisability of purchasing these shares from the Khedive, and that I was to attend a meeting of the Cabinet next day. On the 18th. accordingly I was ushered into the presence of all Her Majesty's Ministers presided over by Mr Disraeli and was called upon to give an opinion as to whether a purchase should be made. I strongly advocated this course, and on the next day, 19th. Novr. I put in a strong Memorandum giving full particulars of the Canal Company and of the Khedive's financial needs, and his endeavours to raise money to meet them. In reply I received the following despatch from the Foreign Office.

Foreign Office.

November 24th. 1875.

Sir,

I am directed by the Earl of Derby to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 19th. inst, enclosing a memorandum on the position of the Khedive towards the Suez Canal Company, and I am to express to you his Lordship's best thanks for your valuable Memorandum.

(Signed) Tenterden.

The same day (24th.) Lord Derby telegraphed to General Stanton that H.M.'s Government agreed to purchase the Khedive's shares for four millions sterling.

The Prime Minister had, through his influence with the House of Rothschild, such means of carrying this bargain into effect, as hardly any other English Statesman could have possessed, and also the courage to use those means. He engaged the Rothschilds to advance the money in the required instalments pending the meeting of Parliament, which could not take place for two or three months.

The actual purchase of the Canal shares was hailed throughout Europe as a most statesmanlike step, and the only people who disapproved were, probably, the French Government and the Radical party in England. It will always be a matter of pride and satisfaction to me that I was, so far, instrumental in confirming Mr. Disraeli in his statesmanlike view of the matter, for, no doubt, he had in his own mind determined upon the measure, but wished to have his judgment fortified by the opinion of his technical adviser. It must be recollected that I had been acting to the Government in that capacity for over two years in all matters connected with the Suez Canal. It was rather a formidable position in which to find myself - to be cross-examined by such a body of able men as composed the Cabinet, but my opinion was so strong on the subject that I did not flinch for a moment from tendering the decisive advice. This led to a detachment of my services from the S.M.E. for some months, as the Government, at the same time that they were making this important purchase, had decided to accede to the request of the Khedive, Ismail Pasha, that they would send out a Confidential Agent to Egypt to examine his financial position. The Agent chosen for this purpose was the Rt. Hon. Stephen Cave, at that time Paymaster-General to the Forces.

On the 25th. Novr. I was summoned to the Foreign Office and saw the Secretary to the Treasury, the Chancellor of the Exchequer and Lord Tenterden. The object of my summons had been to ascertain whether I was willing to accompany Mr. Cave to Egypt to "assist and advise him in his duties as Envoy, and that he might have the benefit of my experience of the country and people" to quote my letter of appointment received on the 1st. Decr. The next day I met Lord Derby, Lord Cairns and Sir Stafford Northcote. I had to get permission from the Inspector General of Fortifications and, through him, from the Commander-in-Chief, to undertake this duty, and, before starting from London, arrangements were made for the Assistant Commandant and the BrigadeMajor at the S.M.E. to carry on my duties in my absence.

On the 8th. December I left for Paris and Brindisi. As good luck would have it, I again had my friend Col. Brooke as a travelling companion. At Turin I joined Mr. Stephen Cave and at Brindisi we embarked on board the P. and O. steamer with the mails. We reached Alexandria on the 16th. and were met by General Stanton who took us up in a special train to Cairo, where we found that a fine palace - the Kasr-el-Nusr - had been prepared for us. The next day the 17th. we were received in audience by the Khedive. Mr. Cave had been very anxious that we should live at an hotel, thinking that we should be more independent in the enquiry we had

to make. The Khedive, however, insisted urgently that, as Mr. Cave had gone out at his request to examine into the financial affairs of the country it was but right that we should be his guests.

He assured us that everything in his power should be done to furnish us with the fullest information on all points, and he hoped that we should find our entertainment at the palace all that we could desire. He had appointed his Chamberlain, Sami Bey, to be constantly in attendance and our entertainments were most sumptuous.

We had the run of the Khedive's stables for riding horses and carriages, and a large staff of servants, who supplied us in the most luxurious manner, with such extravagance that we felt bound to remonstrate against the waste of costly wines &c. which they served at every meal. We had a box at the Opera whenever we required it and in fact, we felt that we were living in clover. The Kasr-el-Nusr, which was situated on the Shubra Road, just outside Cairo, had a charming garden attached to it, and, altogether, was a most delightful residence.

Our first audience of the Khedive was naturally a formal one, but we very soon in our subsequent audiences proceeded with the business for which we had come to Egypt. Of course also, we had to exchange visits with all the principal people in Cairo, as Princes Tewfik, Hussein, and Hassan and the principal Pashas---Ismail Pasha, the Finance Minister, Cherif Pasha and Nubar Pasha, as well as many others; as also with the various Consuls-General.

We had a long conference with General Stanton, whose intimate acquaintance with everything connected with Egyptian administration was most useful to us. It was on the 20th. of December that we had our first business audience of the Khedive followed by a grand *dejeuner* of some thirty to forty people. These audiences of the Khedive were necessarily very arduous to myself, because Mr. Cave spoke but little French, consequently, the burden of the conversation always fell upon me. I endeavoured to explain Mr. Cave's views and the Khedive's replies as well as I could, but also, as I was not a mere interpreter, I felt bound to put forward my own views as well. My real position as far as concerned the Egyptian finance was that of "*ad latus*" to Mr. Cave, which gave me an influential part in all this work. After our audiences I used to make a resume of the interview, giving, as nearly as possible, the substance of the conversations held.

I had also, my own special work in this expedition, the treatment of all the Suez Canal questions and, especially, had to report to the Government everything bearing upon these questions and upon the purchase of the shares by H.M. Government. My notes show that this took up a very great deal of time when I was not occupied with the Khedive and Mr. Cave.

We soon perceived, in our dealings with his Highness, that he was hardly prepared for the very searching manner in which we proposed to deal with the state of his finances; and he rather took alarm at the exposition of our views which was made in our first long interview with him. However, we had to calm him down and show that, although our researches were to be very minute, they involved no immediate action by us. our enquiries entirely depended on the good will of the Khedive and his Finance Minister as their books were all kept in Arabic. It was therefore impossible for us to verify the truth of any assertion they made. We called for various statements which were furnished to us with sufficient promptitude, but we could not feel absolutely certain of the amounts laid before us. The Khedive of that day was a very able, clever man, who had great facility in stating his views in French, but the expression of his face prevented our feeling absolute confidence in what he said. We met with all sorts and conditions of men, English and foreign, who were all ready with their advice as to what we ought and ought not to do, and with warnings against the Egyptians with whom we had dealings. All of which we naturally accepted with a proper amount of reserve. Generally, at first, the Khedive himself put into our hands the various statements of account prepared in the Finance Ministry. Some of the most interesting and lengthy conversations which we had with His Highness related to the various loans which he had made; the most ruinous of which had been that of 1873, negotiated by the Oppenheims.

This loan of £30 million sterling, was so dealt with that, of the enormous capital which appears as part of the indebtedness of the State, barely eight millions reached his coffers. This was the most destructive of all his financial operations, and was that which really brought him to his knees, and compelled him to appeal to the English Government for advice.

A topic of great interest with which the Khedive entertained us in our numerous audiences was that of the expeditions sent by him to Abyssinia, one of which was at that time going on, and was a source of very heavy expenditure of an unremunerative character. We urged upon him in the most pressing manner the advisability of giving up these military expeditions, in which his troops were generally worsted and the resources of his country ruinously affected. Shortly after we left Egypt the utter defeat of the expedition then on hand, upon which we more particularly remonstrated with him, confirmed the soundness of our advice.

One of the sources of outlay which might have been productive, but which became very ruinous to him through the unwisdom of the mode in which it was conducted, was the sugar cultivation which he had started on his properties. He had converted a fine estate into a sugar plantation and set up proper machinery for refining. This answered remarkably well, and he thereupon launched out into an enormous extension of the work, establishing some 14 other plantations for which he ordered the necessary plant from England. The French, thereupon, assailed him with

a charge of favouritism. To satisfy them, he ordered duplicate machinery from France. One of our very interesting expeditions was to inspect these sugar plantations and in many places, we saw lying alongside the road, the duplicate French machinery, not put up, but thrown away. The result of all this sudden and great expansion of the business and of the extravagant way in which it was carried out, was that, although the first plantation had been successful, as a commercial business, it had been found impossible to make so many properties answer equally well; he had not got the experienced men and the attentive supervision necessary to prevent fraud, and make of each a paying concern. No doubt, if he had gone on by degrees, adding a plantation one year, and two or three years later another, he would have formed a valuable property and have found sugar cultivation very remunerative. The few factories that we saw were admirably managed and turned out excellent sugar of all kinds.

It was early in February that we made our expedition to Minieh and other places in order to inspect these plantations. On our way we visited the Pyramids and the tombs of Sakhara. We left the train at about seven miles from the Pyramids and covered the distance on donkeys. We visited the tombs of the Bulls, which are very perfect and, after a thorough examination of them, we began to think we should like to lunch, and were very sorry that we had not insisted upon taking sandwiches with us. But the Khedive, having learned our intention of visiting these tombs, had ordered a sumptuous repast to be sent out, and, after waiting for some time, we saw the camels coming. A grand feast was spread for us in the house of M. Marriette, the French antiquarian, who has done so much in exhuming and collecting the various antiquities of the country. We sat down to a *dejeuner* of the most excellent dishes and wines which might have been served to us in Paris, and then started again for our station. The last half mile of the road back found the little bit of a donkey I was riding so willing that, although my feet almost touched the ground, he nearly ran away with me. We then visited the sugar factories at Minieh, Rhoda, and Abou Kokaz, and the barrage for distributing the Nile water at Darima, returning to dinner at the Palace of Minieh where we put up. The next day we returned North, visiting Samalod, Beni Muzar, and Feshn, reaching Cairo late at night. This visit, in which we gathered the details of the sugar industry given above, was a very interesting one and instructive as to the methods of administration in Egypt.

I must now go back a little to Suez Canal matters. In the first week of January we went down to Ismailia where M. de Lesseps, who had arrived from France, received us very well. The old man, though still maintaining his protests, against all the world, over the settlement of the tonnage question had, with his usual perspicacity, realized the importance to his Company of the purchase of the Suez Canal shares by Her Majesty's Government. He had, at once, called upon Lord Lyons in Paris to offer his congratulations upon their acquisition, and had spoken in most friendly terms of the Government. I had been advised of this before

I went down to Ismailia and endeavoured to improve the relations between the English Government and M. de Lesseps. Naturally he was still sore at the effect which the recommendation of the International Tonnage Commission had had upon his revenue. It appeared to me that an improvement might be made in the compromise which I had carried into effect two years before, by substituting for the sliding scale of reduction of the surtax according to tonnage, a gradual reduction of the same at fixed periods. It seemed to me that this would be an advantage both to the Suez Canal Company and to shipowners, because the latter knowing that on a certain date the reduction in the dues would occur could make their arrangements accordingly, while for the Suez Canal Company, it gave a greater certainty as to what their receipts were likely to be from time to time. I opened the question with M. de Lesseps, always putting in the foreground that any concession which we made for his advantage must be preceded by an absolute renunciation on his part of the protests which he was continually making against the Porte and the Egyptian Government, and that any re-arrangement must be made on a basis of complete peace between all parties. M. de Lesseps seemed inclined to a consideration of this matter but I could see he was very much dissuaded from it by the people about him. In this visit I did no more than just broach the subject and put the idea into his head of the possibility of ending a state of things which was bad both for him and for us. Later M. de Lesseps came up to Cairo, and there I put forward more definitely and strongly the proposals at which he had hinted at Ismailia. I at last arrived at such a point with him that we came to an agreement which I could submit in the rough to H.M. Government. This I did by telegraph, and received permission to follow up my negotiations with him on the lines I had indicated.

On the 3rd. February I took special train to Ismailia to discuss matters with M. de Lesseps and signed a provisional agreement which was to be the basis of our subsequent one. This rough agreement having been sent home, I was finally authorized to sign a Convention embodying it, which I did on the 22nd. February. Under this M. de Lesseps withdrew all his protests against the Powers, on condition that H.M. Government got the present agreement accepted by them; and the surtax compromise was recast in the sense of reductions of tariff being made at fixed dates, so that the surtax would come to an end in 1883, and from 1st. January 1884 the maximum dues to be levied would come down to 10 francs a ton of the Concession. One of the conditions H.M. Government had demanded and which M. de Lesseps conceded, was that three of the Directors of the Suez Canal Company should be named by H.M. Government.

This Convention gave very great satisfaction both at home and to the Egyptian Government, and I received the warmest congratulations all round for having placed Suez Canal matters on such a satisfactory footing. The Sublime Porte in the first instance, and the remaining Powers which had been represented on the International Commission, entirely accepted the new scheme.

This, to me, was a very satisfactory termination to the special duties entrusted to me with regard to the Suez Canal, apart from Mr. Cave's mission.

As regards the Egyptian financial question, upon which I have touched here, it appeared to me that the method of extricating the Khedive from his financial embarrassment was to be found in the redemption of his heavy loan liabilities by consolidating them, and raising a loan on moderate terms, by which they could be paid off, and the eventual burden of the country be very much reduced. I worked out schemes to this effect, which met with Mr. Cave's concurrence, and we sent the substance of them home. The Government rather took alarm at this, as it did not enter into their ideas to propound a scheme to improve the Egyptian finance, our mission being only intended for gaining full information. We were therefore instructed to return home as soon as we had information, without putting forward any such scheme as we had indicated, and we were told that Mr. Rivers Wilson was being sent out to act as financial adviser to the Khedive.

In the course of our enquiries we had obtained an immense mass of information, whether trustworthy or not we could not form an opinion and we now set to work to prepare a report of all that we had seen and heard. Mr. Cave started on his return journey on the 19th. of February, while I remained behind to conclude my business with M. de Lesseps. Before Mr. Cave left, the Finance Minister, Ismail Pasha, invited us to go down to the estate at Tanta in the Delta, to see his property. We took train, and had to ride four or five miles on very rough ponies and jogged back again to the train thoroughly well shaken up. The consequence was that the next day I had a bad bilious attack, and on his arrival at Alexandria, Mr. Cave was far from well.

The report, of course, got about that we had been poisoned at the Minister's house!

Before I left Cairo the Duke of Sutherland arrived there and took a great interest in our affairs, and subsequently we travelled home together.

Among my acquaintances at Cairo were Sir Louis and Lady Mallet and General Sir Douglas Mc.Dougall. Sir Louis I had met in Vienna in 1867, when I was pushing the Danube loan question. He was then at the Board of Trade, took an interest in my work, and helped me. It was pleasant to meet him again, just as I was once more successfully advancing English trade interests.

The Egyptian mission had been, on the whole, very satisfactory to me. I did not leave Cairo till the 27th. Febr. after pleasant audiences of the Khedive, and farewell visits all round.

I overtook the Caves at Turin, my travelling companions being the Duke of Sutherland and the Mallets, and thence we all journeyed together. The Duke went on from Paris, but we stopped at the Hotel Bristol where we met Mr. Rivers Wilson. I saw Lord Lyons, and [Lord Lytton](#), then on his way to India as Viceroy. I also made the acquaintance of M. Charles de Lesseps, but I could see that he did not quite approve of the Convention which I had made with his father. He thought I had got too good terms; but he was most loyal to his father and we soon became good friends. Lord Lyons was very well pleased with the work I had done. He was an old friend to me when he was Ambassador at Constantinople in my Danube time, and he knew of the interest which his father, the Admiral, had taken in the work there in 1856.

We stayed four days in Paris writing our report, which embodied the results of our work, and which could not be completed till then, as I had obtained further details from the Finance Minister after Mr. Cave left. On my way through Paris I also saw M. le Baron d'Avril who had been a former colleague both on the Danube Commission and the Constantinople Commission, and who was interested to hear of the modifications introduced into the arrangement with M. de Lesseps.

On our arrival in England we, of course, had many interviews with Ministers, including Mr. Disraeli, Lord Derby, and Sir Stafford Northcote, and I had the gratification of having my services mentioned in Parliament in flattering terms.

It has been a great satisfaction to know from Sir Rivers Wilson, who remained in Egypt for some time, as Financial Adviser to the Khedive, that the returns of income and expenditure given to us by the Khedive and his Ministers proved to be substantially correct, and that therefore our report was accurate, and formed the basis for measures which were adopted for the development of the country. It was also satisfactory to me to know that the reform of Egyptian finance really followed out the suggestion which we had made (although we were not allowed to put it forward) of reducing Egyptian liabilities by consolidating the debt, a suggestion the details of which I had worked out.

As soon as I returned home I had to take up my military duties, which had been very carefully attended to in my absence by Col. Cox and Major Keith, but there was a great deal for me to study, in order to get again into the swing of the command, the details of which I had hardly had time to master when I left. My time, therefore, was very fully occupied between these duties and the constant attendances I had to make at the Foreign Office and the Treasury in connection with the Egyptian work.

Mr. Cave's report (which I speak of as his, though in reality I had a very large share in its composition), was well received by our Government and anxiously awaited by the Khedive, though it was some time before

the Government thought fit to communicate it to him. The double character of my mission to Egypt, seeing that it was connected with the Suez Canal, though I was there principally to assist Mr. Cave in his investigation into Egyptian finance, left me with a double feeling in the matter.

As regarded the Suez Canal work I had unmitigated satisfaction; as regarded the finance business both Mr. Cave and myself felt that we had been rather misapprehended, and obliged to leave more hurriedly than we should otherwise have done. However, the general result may be described as satisfactory to us, though, of course, a thorny question such as Egyptian finance, in which numbers of people were interested, was sure to expose us to a good deal of criticism. It remained, for a long time, a subject on which the Foreign Office frequently referred to me for an opinion.

The immediate consequence of my Suez Canal Convention was that I was in constant correspondence with the Foreign Office and was often consulted about obtaining from the several Powers who had taken part in the International Tonnage Commission at Constantinople in 1873, their concurrence in the new arrangement which I had made with M. de Lesseps. This concurrence was finally obtained towards the end of May, and M. de Lesseps then prepared to carry out his part of the agreement arrived at in the Convention of the 22nd. February.

M. Charles de Lesseps came over to England early in June, and I had several conferences with him, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and the Foreign Office, which lasted over a week, settling details of the election of Directors in the Suez Canal Council on behalf of the English Government. Mr. Riley, the legal adviser of the Treasury, was called very much into council in all this business.

I was the first of the three Directors whom the Government fixed upon for this purpose, and Mr. Rivers Wilson was named by the Treasury to represent financial interests. I strongly recommended to the Foreign Office my friend, Mr. Standen, who had for 17 years been with me, first at Kertch, and afterwards as my private secretary for nearly the whole of the time that I was a Commissioner on the Danube. The technical knowledge which he had acquired on all matters connected with the Danube works during his long service with me and his acquaintance with the French language pointed him out as a valuable man to name as Director to reside in Paris and look constantly and closely into all matters of the Suez Canal Company. It had been decided that, of the three Directors, one should live in Paris, it being only necessary for Mr. Rivers Wilson and myself to go over to the monthly meetings of the Board.

To fix finally all these points I paid a visit to Paris in the third week of June and arranged everything with M. Ferdinand de Lesseps, and the following week at the General Meeting of the shareholders, I and my two

colleagues were formally elected Directors. Both M. de Lesseps and his son have always carried out with the greatest loyalty the arrangements to which they then agreed. It was a matter requiring some delicacy of treatment-to persuade a body of French shareholders to elect Directors to represent the Government which they had always been taught to look upon as their great enemy: but M. de Lesseps recognized that I had been a true friend to the Company, and was able to render my name agreeable to the body of Shareholders; and I think I may fairly claim that the influence which I had acquired over him facilitated my election and that of the two other members.

This has been an important step in my career, as I have now, for more than 25 years, represented H.M. Government on the Suez Canal Council, and, as will be seen from what follows, I have had to treat many difficulties which have arisen at different times. The remainder of the year 1876 was much taken up with these matters and the important military duties of my position at Chatham.

One of the interesting incidents of this year was a visit from Lord Napier of Magdala and his son and daughters, when we had the opportunity of showing him the Engineer Establishment which had grown vastly since he had passed through it as a young Engineer Officer from Addiscombe.

This summer, too, I had the pleasure of making the acquaintance of some of my wife's cousins in Worcestershire. I took my daughter Edith down to Droitwich that she might derive benefit from the baths there for a rheumatic attack from which she was suffering, and I then went over to Salwarpe to see the William Douglasses, who were doubly connected with us, Mrs. Douglas being a half-sister of my wife's cousin, Walsham How, afterwards Bishop of Wakefield, and William Douglas, her husband, being first cousin to my dear brother Edward's widow.

Another interesting visit I paid was to Sir Thomas Farrar at Abinger Hall, near Wootten, where I had much discussion with Mr. Cave, whom I met there, on the subject of the Order of the Bath, the Government still desiring to confer upon me some token of Her Majesty's satisfaction with the duties I had performed in connection with the Suez Canal. As previously stated, I had been considered deserving of the K.C.B. on my return in 1874, and my record of services had been strengthened and added to by the work I had done in Egypt during the previous winter. There was again talk of knighthood, but I steadfastly declined anything short of the Order of the Bath. I pointed out to Mr. Cave that the Order of the Bath had been enlarged for Military purposes, but not for Civil. Considering the large increase in the Civil Service of the country and the much larger number of individuals whom the Government consequently wished to recognize, the simple plan would be to enlarge the Order of the Civil Division, and when the Civil Division of the Order was enlarged in the course of a few months, I was one of the first recipients.

My life at this time was a constant round of duties of all sorts, rather interfered with by frequent attacks of severe headache, to which I had been subject for some years, and which the rather excessive work I was now going through, had somewhat increased. In the autumn of the year we had the pleasure of moving into the new house that had been built for the Commandant of the School of Military Engineering, in the grounds of the R.E. Institute. The furnishing and fitting up of this house occupied very pleasantly some of our time. It was a matter in which my wife took great interest and, as the house had been building under my personal directions, while I was Commanding Engineer, and was subsequently finished while I had the opportunity of constantly overlooking it, it had been made more like a private house than most military quarters. There was a nice piece of ground, with good trees, which had the makings of a flower garden, and there we built a greenhouse. We retained the garden of the old Commandant's house as our vegetable garden.

While I had been in Cairo the previous winter I had bought Persian carpets with a view to this change. We were able to make our house very nice, as one of the points I had secured was the laying of a parquet floor in the drawing-room which enabled us to have the young officers in for a dance without very much trouble. We had several housewarming entertainments, as the rooms were of sufficient size to enable us to receive. It was naturally a great pleasure to me, having been born in that neighbourhood, with all my county friends around me, to be able to entertain them, which it was my duty as Commandant to do.

The early part of 1877 passed in the same way - constant work and frequent drives to see our friends round about.

But, unhappily, in the month of June, a serious misfortune befell us. My poor wife was struck down with paralysis on the 28th of the month and from that day onward for sixteen years, she lingered, a confirmed invalid. As it happened, when this sad attack came I had no one in the house with me but my son, Frank, as the two elder girls were away visiting, and the youngest was at school; he was however a great help and support to me, and my two daughters of course returned at once.

It had been the custom at Chatham for a few years to have a great display of siege operations. As some time had elapsed since the last, we decided to have one in the summer of 1877. For that purpose it was necessary to carry out the instructional field works with a view to a sham attack. The trenches were designed as against the fortress and mining and counter-mining operations were prepared. This was going on all through the months of May and June, with a view to having a great display early in July. Unfortunately the glare of the hot sun on the chalk thrown up in these works and on the water in preparing certain submarine operations brought on a return of the opthalmic attack from which I had suffered so much at Constantinople six years before, and, towards the end of June, I

had to lie up for several days. Of course my private misfortune could not be allowed to interfere with the great function which had been preparing so long, and on the 27th of July we had a great day. H.R.H. the Duke of Cambridge and other military authorities came down, and we had a most successful review.

On the 10th of July whilst sitting at the Horse Guards on a Committee of Siege Operations generally, (not our Chatham display) I received a note from Mr. Disraeli offering me a Knight-Commandership of the Bath, which Her Majesty was graciously pleased to confer. I accepted it, and during the day called upon Mr. Disraeli, Lord Derby, and Sir Stafford Northcote to express my sense of the honour. On the 14th. August I went down to Osborne to receive Knighthood at the hand of Her Majesty, and the Insignia of the Order. We had a special train from Victoria to Portsmouth where the "Fairy Queen" took us across to Cowes, and carriages were waiting to take us to Osborne. There were many old friends in the same carriage; Sir Frederick Chapman was going to receive his Grand Cross, and Edmund du Cane, like myself, to receive the Commandership. This event gave rise to much hearty congratulation from all my friends and I have a rich budget of letters expressing affection and pleasure at the distinction conferred upon me.

The great drawback on obtaining this distinction was my dear wife's condition. The honour would have been doubly pleasant to me if it could have been shared by her, but she was fated never to derive much pleasure or satisfaction from it, except the dimmed feeling for my sake of which her clouded brain was alone capable.

Our life at home was very much changed by the sad illness of my wife. We could not of course, continue the entertainment of the officers and friends, to which we had looked forward, and had already begun, and we naturally had to lead a very quiet life for a long time afterwards.

During the remainder of 1877, and for the greater part of 1878, my life was a constant round of duties at Chatham, and I began at that time my visits to Paris every month on Suez Canal affairs.

In the course of this period I was able to effect a great change in the class of music played by the R.E. string band. We all took great delight in hearing it: the Bandmaster, Herr Sawerthal, was a great favourite and a very successful leader and conductor. It was suggested to me by Major Hale R.E. that under such a capable man we might train them to play classical music in addition to operatic and dance music. I entered very fully into this proposal and gave the necessary instructions, which have resulted in the Engineer Band becoming so excellent that it takes its place with the finest bands in the country. Among the amusements which served to enliven my life was that of shooting with my friends round Cobham. I also took to playing lawn-tennis, a game of which I became very fond, having been a racquet player in my youth.

I had with me at Chatham, at this time, several officers whom I had trained when instructing the practical class of cadets at Woolwich in 1852-5, notably Major Maquay, whom I had taken out to the Crimea in '55, Majors Percy-Smith, and Hale. Other officers whom I had not so trained, but to whom I became much attached were Captains Armstrong and R.G.Scott, Majors Warren, Martin, and Keith, Colonels Cox, Akers and Harvey, and many others. It was a delight to be living amongst so many of my brotherofficers from whom, for the long period of my Danube Service, I had been entirely separated, and I feel that many friendships were formed with them which will last through my life.

Note - it is sad to think that since these days - Maquay, Percy-Smith, R.G. Scott, Armstrong, Keith, Akers and Harvey have all preceded me to that other world where there will be no more partings.

In looking back upon the last thirty years, during fifteen of which I was in close touch with the Corps, it is very gratifying to me to meet with so many men who speak gratefully of the good turns I was able to do them at times when I held positions of authority. From some of the younger ones who were with me at Chatham I have had most touching reminiscences of past times. The dear old Corps lies always close to my heart and I follow the achievements of these young officers with a tender anxiety for their welfare and deepest interest in the work which I see so many of them accomplishing in different parts of the world, especially in the South African War which is going on as I write.

During the year 1878, my daughter, Edith, who had been suffering much from rheumatism, had an invitation from my brother Frank in South Australia to go out there for a thorough change, and he suggested that she might travel with Sir William Jervois and his family. Sir William, who was going out as Governor of that Colony, was an old friend of mine; we had served in South Africa in the early forties, and had been intimate ever since. He and his wife kindly undertook the charge of my dear child and in July I saw her embark at Gravesend on board the "Lusitania", to be joined by them at Plymouth.

In August 1878, I had a very narrow escape of my life. Having had a severe attack of lumbago I had gone to stay with an old friend, Capt. Robert Isacke. On our way back on the 31st. August, travelling in an express train that was to stop at Chatham, we had a fearful collision at Sittingbourne. As we were dashing into that station a man who was shunting empty trucks, by accident shunted three across the line along which we were approaching, instead of into a siding. Our driver saw these trucks 200 yards ahead of him and, though he endeavoured to reduce speed, dashed into them with great force. The first three or four carriages were completely telescoped, and the carriage in which I was sitting, reading with my back to the engine, opposite my daughter, was smashed. My only recollection was hearing a scream, and the next moment I found myself under the roof of the carriage, on a sloping bank.

I had fallen in a most remarkable manner on my neck, as the mud showed, and turned a somersault, the roof at the same time falling on me and wedging me in an angle between itself and the sloping embankment alongside. On regaining consciousness I wriggled out of the angle and found the other passengers near me in a great state of alarm. A clergyman next to me, who had been in the same carriage, suggested our returning thanks; my heart was full of thankfulness, but my mind was also full of anxiety for my daughter, for whom I ran to look. I found that she had fallen as I had myself, - on her neck and back. I was very thankful to find her sitting up with no bones broken. She was only scratched on the face, and really had sustained less injury than I had. Naturally she was much shaken and, as we were only three or four hundred yards from the station, I told her to sit where she was till I could secure a cab, and got a little brandy and water to restore her shaken condition. At the same time I telegraphed to the station master at Chatham to send my carriage, which was waiting for me there, to meet us at Sittingbourne. When I got back to my daughter I picked up some of our things which were scattered about, and very soon restored her sufficiently to allow of her making her way to the station, as I had proposed. I thus spared her the shock of seeing many horrors. As it turned out afterwards, 6 people were killed and 40 injured. We soon met my carriage and sent back the cab. Reaching home I sent for a doctor, who examined us, but my child had really suffered no other injury than the fright and a few scratches. I was hurt severely across the loins, and my nervous system sustained a shock. Russell Reynolds told me to lie up for four months which I did. Happily my daughter's nerves had not been shaken to the same extent as mine, and she was soon able to go back to school. This accident, owing to the shock I had sustained, obliged me to abstain from much work for the remainder of the year. The collision itself made less sensation than it usually would have done, as the next day a frightful collision occurred on the Thames, in which the steamer "Princess Alice", was sunk. she was crowded with excursionists mostly women and children, 300 of whom were drowned, and this entirely effaced from people's minds the memory of the grievous collision at Sittingbourne.

The year 1879, was spent much as the early part of 1878 had been. My dear wife recovered her mental powers so far as to be able to write letters, and her physical powers returned so that she was able to take walks and go to Church. These signs of improvement developed to such an extent that in the month of May I felt it would be good for my eldest daughter to get a rest. I therefore left my wife in the care of her sister Mrs. Hare, and took Gina to Paris where I was going to make a longer stay than usual, as in the year 1879 I had been requested to serve on the Panama Congress which M. de Lesseps was promoting at that time.

It was a very pleasant change for both of us after the long watch we had had for two years over her Mother, and we met with great kindness from everyone there, especially from Lord Lyons, H.M. Ambassador, and the de Lesseps - both the old man and his wife, and his son Charles and his

wife. We also met Sir Charles Hartley, Sir John Hawkshaw, and many engineers of France and America who had come to Paris for the discussion of this great project.

M. de Lesseps was bent on having a canal through the Isthmus of Panama at the sea level: the American Engineers put forward a project by which the canal would pass through the Lake of Nicaragua, rising by nine locks from the Atlantic, and descending by eight locks to the Pacific; and there were various other schemes proposed. However, the great majority of the Congress, which was composed of members of various countries, sided with M. de Lesseps in his desire to have a sea-level canal. There were many committees formed, one was to work out the technical details, another to ascertain what statistic results were likely to be achieved, and another to consider the economical effect of the canal on various nations. The whole thing was very thoroughly gone into, and eventually M. de Lesseps argument prevailed, viz, that the sea-canal through the Panama Isthmus should be carried out.

The general scheme of this project was that the canal should ascend the valley of the Chagres River and that the Sierra should then be cut through, and the canal continue to the Pacific down the valley of the Rio Grande. The essential feature of this scheme was to be a huge dam which was to block the River Chagres at a point where it passed through a very narrow gorge. The river was to be held back behind this dam, forming a lake of vast area in the upper regions, the surplus waters being carried off by a small canal above the level of the sea-canal, which would furnish sufficient fresh water for all purposes of there shipping navigation below that point. It was recommended by the Congress that no work should be undertaken on the Chagres river until this dam had been constructed, as the river was subject to very heavy floods, the water rising as much as 24 feet in the spring of the year. Such floods would sweep away any works attempted in the river bed, which therefore had to be straightened to form the canal. The Panama railway ran parallel to the proposed canal, and therefore could be used for the transport of workmen and materials employed in cutting through the Sierra; the debris was to be thrown into the Chagres bed during the ten months that intervened between the floods of successive springs. This appeared to be feasible. The complete failure of those works would appear to have been due to the fact that the mode of construction proposed was not carried out.

On the strength of the report of this Congress, M. de Lesseps formed a Company for the purpose of raising the necessary funds and executing the work. He asked me to be one of the Directors, but I declined, H.M. Government not wishing to have anything to do with the project.

On our return home we were sorry to find that my wife's condition was less favourable than when we left her. She had relapsed to the state in which she had been before showing so many signs of recovery. From that month of June, when we returned from Paris, she gradually went back.

CHAPTER XIII

The Port of Alexandria

In the month of November I was requested by Lord Salisbury to form one of an International Commission that was to be appointed to examine the works at the Port of Alexandria, and decide on what dues should be levied on shipping, so as to furnish a fair revenue on the outlay of capital, without burdening trade too much. This International Commission was to sit in Paris, and the technical members were to visit various ports in the Mediterranean with a view to collecting data on which to furnish the required information. My diplomatic colleague for this purpose was Mr. Rainals, H.M. Consul at Brest, and our International colleagues were from France, Italy and Austria.

As on former occasions I was allowed by the Commander-in-Chief to undertake this duty, the Assistant-Commandant and Brigade-Major carrying on my duties at Chatham in my absence. The Commission held its first meeting in Paris on the 26th. Novr. and did not conclude its labours till the 29th. April 1880.

We decided to visit the harbours of Marseilles, Genoa and Naples on our way to Egypt, leaving Leghorn, Trieste and Venice to be visited on our way home. We started on the 28th. Novr. for Marseilles which is a very interesting harbour, entirely artificial, and created by the construction of a huge breakwater across the front of the town, inside of which are docks, quays and wharves. Here we took various information as regarded the mode of conducting business in the port, the dues levied, the class of ships and the extent of the works. My companions on this journey were M. la Roche from France and M. Dionisio the Italian. I took with me as my private secretary, Mr. Bensley, a retired Admiralty official now married to one of the Miss Rankens.

We left Marseilles on the 1st. Decr. for Genoa. We had a long cold journey and put up at the Hotel Isotta which was very good. We visited the port works next day, and found them most interesting.

The Gulf of Genoa forms a far better natural harbour than that which exists at Marseilles and the works thrown out there protect it against the roll of the sea. It was a lively day and the town of Genoa looked beautiful from the water. We visited various public offices and took evidence on some subjects as before. Here, at Genoa, I met some old Galatz friends the Rodocanachis, with whom it gave me great pleasure to renew my acquaintance of ten years before. Beautiful as had been the day when we were inspecting the harbour, when we left Genoa on the night of the 3rd. Decr. we started in a perfect blizzard of wind and snow, so heavy that we had difficulty in arriving at the station. We got off, however, and arrived the next day at Rome where we remained only a few hours, barely sufficient for me to take my friend Bensley for a hurried drive through the ancient city. It was just enough to make the impossibility of staying

longer and seeing more most tantalising to him. From Rome we went on to Naples, where the harbour did not offer much to help us. On the second day after our arrival we went on to Foggia; where we slept, and thence the next day to Brindisi and, after a fairly good voyage, reached Alexandria on the 11th. Decr. I met on board Lady Augusta Loftus on her way to join her husband, then Governor of New South Wales, whom I had previously known as H.M. Ambassador at Berlin.

At Alexandria our principal work began. We visited the new harbour works, which had been constructed by Sir George Elliott, though his name did not appear, the nominal Directors being Greenshields and Company. Here I became acquainted with Capt. Blomfield R.N. who was Captain of the Port, and Morice Bey who was the head of the lighthouse service. The Consul, Mr. Cookson, was an old Constantinople friend. We had many conferences with the contractors, engineers, and merchants of the place, as well as with the above named people. I was invited by Cookson to meet Sir Richard Burton the traveller at dinner. He was an interesting man but I was so disgusted with his language that I took an early opportunity of leaving the table. After nearly a fortnight, I went up on the 24th. Decr. to Cairo in order to pass my Christmas there.

During my stay at Alexandria I had received secret instructions to endeavour to obtain from the Egyptian Government the removal of the obstacles in the channel leading into the Alexandrian harbour through the outer reef, which made it impossible for vessels to enter at night-time or in bad weather. The fine harbour works constructed by Elliott would, it was judged, gain very much in value by the opening of a good, straight, deep channel into the outer harbour.

The Egyptian Government had hitherto steadfastly opposed any improvement of this kind on account of their wish to keep it difficult for the Suzerain Power, or, indeed for any Power, to send large vessels of war into the harbour.

In order to carry out my instructions, I had several interviews while at Cairo with the young Khedive, Tewfik Pasha, whose acquaintance when heir apparent, I had made on a previous occasion, and with his Grand Vizier, Riaz Pasha. I succeeded in inducing both Tewfik Pasha and the Grand Vizier to see the advantage of completing their fine works by deepening the entrance; and I undertook to persuade the merchants of Alexandria to consent to such a tariff of dues as would repay the cost of the works. I had already sounded the principal merchants there on the subject, and had found a strong disposition on their part to facilitate this improvement, by consenting to a moderate scale of harbour dues to cover the expense.

In all of this negotiation I received the cordial and warm support of Mr. Mallet, who had succeeded my friend Stanton as Consul-General.

While I was dining with him one evening, we were startled by the announcement that Gordon Pasha had arrived, and presently in he walked, straight from his dangerous mission to King John of Abyssinia. With his usual simplicity of character he took his seat as though he had just come in from next door. All he had to say was of the greatest interest, and, as he had not been heard of for some time, anxiety had been felt for his safety.

After twelve days at Cairo I went down with M. Victor de Lesseps and others to the Suez Canal. M. Laroche joined us at Ismailia and we went on to Suez, from whence we made a voyage through the Canal, carefully visiting various points and reaching Port Said on the 7th. January. M. Laroche was specially interested in this inspection as he had passed many years of his life at Port Said, where he was the engineer in charge of the construction of the harbour and piers. All the employees and workpeople of the Canal remembered him well, and he was, therefore, pleased to see them all again. We stayed a short time at Ismailia on our way back, to get certain information that I required, and thence made our way to Alexandria by train. Here we resumed our examinations of the various officials with a view to obtaining data on which to frame the tariff of dues that we meant to submit for adoption to the full Commission on our return to Paris. I, at the same time, carried on negotiations with the merchants, and held one or two meetings to consider the question of the tax they would consent to for the improvement of the entrance to the harbour. The result was that we framed a tariff for harbour works with such an eventual addition to the various dues as would pay for the entrance channel works, if they were ever undertaken. I had carried my negotiations with Riaz Pasha and the Khedive so far, when in Cairo, that they had consented to the appointment of a small international Commission of Engineers to meet in London, for the purpose of making recommendations as to the best mode of deepening the entrance.

I therefore had the satisfaction of feeling, on leaving Alexandria, that I had fully carried out the secret instructions which I had received. This I had done, not as if I was instructed to do so, but as if, on my own initiative.

I had carried with me my International technical colleagues, and it was they who were eventually appointed by the Egyptian Government to be members of the International Commission to meet in London. During my last week at Alexandria, on the 16th. January, I received the grievous news from my dear Gina that her Mother had been stricken down again by another stroke of paralysis, and was not expected to live for more than two or three days. In this trouble I had the warm sympathy of my friends, the Blomfields. Mrs. Blomfield was an especially nice, kindly person. Happily, two days later I had better news from Gina, which was confirmed later.

We left on the 23rd. January for Venice and Trieste.

I received great assistance at Alexandria from Mr. Chapman, the Agent of the P. and O. Company, Mr. Carver one of the leading merchants, Mr. Cookson, the Consul, and Morice Pasha, in my arrangements with the Alexandrian people.

We had a fairly smooth passage to Brindisi and up the Adriatic, reaching Venice on the 28th. January. We did not stay any time in Venice, but took train to Trieste, which we reached the same evening. Here I had the pleasure of meeting M. Zamara, who had been one of my Austrian colleagues on the Constantinople Commission in 1873. We visited the authorities of the Port, and received every assistance from them in inspecting the harbour and examining the works, as well as all the details of the harbour management, the port dues etc. We also went over the establishments of the Austrian Lloyds S.N. Company.

During our stay at Trieste I visited the palace of Miramar, which was formerly the residence of the ill-fated Archduke Maximilian, before he became the Emperor of Mexico. The most attractive thing to me in the palace was a portrait of the Empress Maria Theresa, a portrait worthy of the strong personality rendered especially interesting to me owing to my long residence in the neighbourhood of the Hungarian frontier.

I stayed rather longer at Trieste than my colleagues, and before leaving there called on Mrs. Burton the wife of Consul Burton, the great traveller, whom I had met and disliked at Alexandria a few weeks before. She was almost as eccentric as her husband, but a fine looking woman and very tall.

Mr. Brock, the Vice-Consul, was very attentive and obliging. He took me for a drive in the country on the last day of my stay. A great feature of the hills round Trieste is their hard, sterile look; they are covered with stones. Mr. Brock told me that in the old Napoleonic Wars, England drew her supplies of oak from these parts, which accounted for the hills being so denuded of timber. The authorities were, at the time of my visit, trying to get plantations of the *Pinus Austriacus* to grow on the stony hill sides, and I walked along the rows of plants - each carefully rooted in the soil underlying the stones. These stones were of varying sizes, from a cricket ball to a man's head. By careful watching and nursing the plants were beginning to grow well.

I started on the 2nd. Febr. on which day I travelled through Bologna to Florence, and the next day went on to Leghorn, where I was met by M. Laroche and Dionisio. We there visited the harbour works and went, on the 5th. to Genoa.

Leaving Genoa at a very early hour on the 6th., I had a delightful journey to Marseilles: the day was lovely and the scenery most exquisite. The railway follows the coast, plunging through short tunnels, from one little

bay into another; a succession of lovely pictures of the coast is thus presented to the traveller.

At Marseilles we again visited the port and authorities, and the harbour works, after which we started for Paris.

Our first days at Paris were devoted to drawing up the report of the technical committee which had visited the various harbours, for the consideration of the full body of the Commission. This took nearly a week, at the end of which I returned home for a few days to see my poor wife. I found her in a most grievous condition. She was helpless and unable to speak or do anything for herself, and, being hardly able to swallow, it was a matter of great difficulty to keep her alive.

I happily reached England in time to be present at my son Alfred's Public Day at Woolwich, which came off on the 17th. February. His commission in the Royal Artillery was dated 18th. February 1880. My poor wife's seizures seemed always to come at moments which deprived her of special pleasures. The first happened when I got the K.C.B. and then again when her dear son got his commission. It would have been a source of joy and pride if she could have realised it.

After a few days in England I returned to Paris, to continue my work on the Alexandria harbour dues Commission. During my absence in Egypt, unfortunately for me, a change of Government took place, so that, instead of finding Lord Salisbury at the head of the Foreign Office, I had to deal with Lord Granville. I was indeed favourably known to him in former years, but in this particular mission in which I had been engaged, he did not take any interest; and, therefore, my successful accomplishment of the secret instructions I had received, did not meet with any response from him.

I reached Paris again on the 23rd. Febr. and resumed, with M. Laroche and M. Dionisio, the consideration of our technical Report, which we revised, and completed by recommendations as to the tariff of dues to be levied. This tariff was framed on the lines that I had agreed upon with the Merchants at Alexandria. I was much occupied also in discussing with my colleague, Mr. Rainalds, various points in a memorandum which he had drawn up, as it was important that he should be thoroughly well informed and able to support my views independently in the full Commission. M. Branca, the senior Italian delegate, was coached in the same way by M. Dionisio.

On the 5th. March I again returned home and stayed there till the 29th. when I returned to Paris to resume the discussion of the Alexandrian dues.

The Commission re-assembled on the 1st. April, and after holding 18 meetings, presented a tolerably harmonious Report to the Governments

represented in it, but I do not remember ever to have had any acknowledgement even of the receipt of our despatches on the subject, still less any thanks for a very laborious duty.

At the end of April I had the great delight of welcoming my dear Edith on her return from Australia after an absence of nearly two years.

CHAPTER XIV

Military Duties: Channel Tunnel 1880 - 1886

All through the summer of 1880 I was employed on interesting work connected with experiments of the breaching qualities of our new guns. Solid revetments had been built at Dungeness during the past year to represent a front of fortification. These were now to be tested by firing from batteries constructed at Lydd, just off the Romney Marsh. I passed many days in watching the firing, and inspecting its effect on the revetments. We also carried out night operations with submarine mining defences at Portsmouth, in the month of August. These military duties, as well as a great deal of Suez Canal work, kept me very closely occupied for the remainder of the year. In the month of November I was appointed a member of the Royal Commission on Tonnage Measurement, of which Mr. C.M. Norwood M.P. was Chairman. The other members of the Royal Commission were, Sir E.J. Reed. K.C.B. M.P., Mr. H.C. Rothery, Mr. Thomas Gray, Mr. J.P. Corry M.P., Mr. R. Capper, Mr. John Glover, Mr. William Pearce, Mr. E.B. Royden, Mr. Bernard Waymouth, with Mr. J.E. Wilkins as Secretary.

On my return from the Constantinople Commission in 1874, a Select Committee of the House of Commons, presided over by Sir Charles Adderley, who was then President of the Board of Trade, was sitting for the consideration of the tonnage measurement of ships in this country. I was summoned to give evidence before it concerning the rules adopted at Constantinople for the International tonnage measurement, and was plied with 300 questions by thirteen of the fifteen members of the Committee. These questions were, many of them, interesting and they turned upon my Danube work, as well as on that at Constantinople, drawing out some replies which I find it amusing to read now.

Nothing was done in the way of modifying our tonnage rules in consequence of the report of that Committee, but difficulties, then existing, had been growing, and it was determined to submit the whole question to a Royal Commission. We began our duties on the 26th. November 1880, but, as our labours lasted for six months, I reserve mention of the results till later.

In addition to all these duties I had, early in June, been appointed member of a Committee for considering the question of the Pay and Promotion of the Royal Artillery and Royal Engineers, and during the remainder of the year had to attend a great number of the meetings which were presided over by the Earl of Morley, the Under Secretary of State for War. On the 9th. December after attending one of these Committee meetings, as I was walking along Pall Mall, I met General Gallwey, Inspector General of Fortifications, who gave me the important bit of news that I was going to be "kicked upstairs". My post of Commandant at Chatham was to be given to Sir Andrew Clarke and I was to be appointed Deputy Adjutant General of the Royal Engineers.

I received this news with very mixed feelings. Undoubtedly, the post of D.A. General of the R.E. is a very important one, but though, subsequently, I was entirely reconciled to it, at that time, with my dear wife lying so very ill at Chatham, it was a great blow to me to think that I must turn out of our comfortable home there, surrounded as I was by so many friends both of my Corps and of my youth, and I shrank from the idea of it. The change was not to take place immediately as Col. J. Grant, then holding this appointment at the War of five, was not to vacate it till the 1st. April following.

In 1880 I received a sword of honour from the Sultan of Morocco in recognition of the attention received by three of his Officers who had been sent over to the School of Military Engineering for instruction in military matters, and who had been there for two years under my general directions specially superintended by Capt. Plunkett R.E. whose services I had mentioned and to whom the Sultan also awarded a sword of honour and a present of £100.

Early in January 1881, the news came of the revolt of the Boers against our authority in the Transvaal, and my son's battery, commanded by my dear old friend Major Harry Edmeades, R.A. was among the first of the reinforcements ordered out. The General Commanding at Chatham, Sir Evelyn Wood, was sent out to take command of these troops, and I was able to introduce to him my friend Hartley, who was making a trip to Africa to see his brother, then living in Natal.

My dear boy's Battery was ordered to Portsmouth where they embarked on the 12th. January. I had gone down there on the 10th. to see him, and had the pleasure of meeting Sir Henry Acland, of Oxford, whose son was a subaltern in the same Battery. I stayed at Portsmouth with Col. John Jervois, who was Commanding Engineer there. I also met my friend Major Percy Smith R.E. who was the Director of Works in Portsmouth Dockyard. At this time also, I had to consider the question of the Alexandria harbour dues again.

On the 18th. January occurred one of the most violent snowstorms that I have ever witnessed in this country. It reminded me of the furious blizzards we used to have in the Danubian Provinces. Next day I had to attend one of the meetings of the Tonnage Commission in London, and found on my arrival at Charing Cross that no cabs could possibly get about. The snow was standing eight or ten feet deep in Pall Mall: it was piled up against the walls so that I could only struggle along with a man to carry my portmanteau, to No.26, (Hartley's rooms) where at that time, I generally stayed when I was in town. The whole country was buried in snow, trains were stopped in all directions, and many people suffered much from cold and hunger while imprisoned in their railway carriages for hours. I remained two days in town and then made my way down to stay at Fartherwell, in Kent with my dear old friend Edward Bligh, and his nice wife and daughter. The Dean of York and Lady Emma Cust and

other dear friends were there. I had a further opportunity of judging of the tremendous fall of snow that had taken place all through the country as I drove to the station at Snodland and my track was level with the tops of the hedges.

I managed to get home next day and found that a sleigh which I had had made the previous year, had been sent to meet me at the station. For a day or two we had a very pleasant amusement in sleighing about the country. Our sleigh with our old Galatz equipment of wolf skins and bells, made a great sensation as we glided merrily through Rochester and over to Cobham. The fun did not last however, for the snow disappeared under a warm rain, even more quickly than it had come. Unfortunately, the cold and glare brought on an acute attack of my old enemy, rheumatic ophthalmia.

I may mention a very sad occurrence that took place in the barracks while I was laid up. On the 11th. Febr. a young officer, Lieut. Roper R.E. was murdered just outside his room door. Being laid up at the time it was impossible for me to take any active part in the investigations which followed. I cannot say whether I or anyone else could have done more than was done. Good detectives were employed at once but in spite of all they could do, no clue from that day to this has ever been found by which the murderer could be traced.

It may easily be imagined what a profound sensation all through the garrison this murder created! My daughters were at a concert given for the Sappers that evening and though they became aware that something terrible had happened, they were kept in ignorance of the actual facts until afterwards.

In the same month (January 1881), whilst suffering from this attack I had a surprise one evening, by being asked to give my permission for my eldest daughter, Gina, to be married to Mr. Arthur Hamilton, the younger son of the Reverend Canon Hamilton, of Rochester Cathedral, with whom we had long been on very intimate and friendly terms. In view of the early move we were about to make, and of the desire of all that the wedding should take place while we were still at Chatham, it was necessary to fix an early date for it, and the 1st. of March was eventually decided upon. Being the first wedding in the family, at home, it was of course a great event. It was especially agreeable to us that the marriage should take place where we had so many friends, and in the cathedral, of which Arthur's Father was Canon, with which I had been connected all my life, and with the principal authorities of which I had lived in most friendly intimacy for several years past. Dean Scott had been a friend of my brother Edward at Oxford, when he was Master of Balliol, and his wife and daughters were intimate with my family as well as with that of the Hamiltons.

The wedding was a very gay affair, as all the officers attending it were in full uniform and we had the whole country-side including our dear friends from Cobham Hall, Owletts, Nurstead and Camer as well as the General and Admiral and the whole Garrison and the Marine and Dockyard officers, as our guests in the choir, while the nave was filled with an immense number of people. The ceremony was performed by the dean, assisted by Canon Hamilton and his son the Reverend Charles Hamilton.

We had a great gathering afterwards at the Commandant's house, sitting down to Breakfast. Walsham How, my wife's cousin, then Bishop of Bedford, (afterwards of Wakefield) honoured us with his presence, and proposed the health of the Bride and Bridegroom. The universal sympathy and satisfaction of all our friends was a source of great comfort and pleasure to us; the only drawback being the condition of my Pool wife, which prevented her from entering into the general happiness, although she was in a measure better than she had been when I returned from Egypt the year before.

During the previous weeks we had been much occupied in looking for a house in London, where we had to make our abode during the coming five years, for which, in the ordinary course of things, I should hold the Staff appointment. This we found in Gledhow Gardens, in South Kensington. The house we took, No. 11, proved a very nice and comfortable one. Arrangements for the move were made in such a way as to have rooms ready for my wife on the day she left the quarters at Chatham. By the use of an invalid carriage we managed the move for her most successfully, and without injury or discomfort. It was naturally very trying to part with our many friends. I should mention among others the Revd. D. Cooke, who had known my Father many years before, and with whom we lived on the best of terms. He was one of our near neighbours at Chatham. He was Vicar of Holy Trinity Church, Brompton, and afterwards Canon of Rochester. I often used to help him by reading the lessons.

Before we left Chatham we had the pleasure of a visit from the young couple, after their short honeymoon, curtailed by their kind desire to help us in our move.

As Deputy Adjutant General I found my duties in connection with H.R.H. the Duke of Cambridge, the Commander-in-Chief, exceedingly pleasant. He was a most kind and courteous Chief, with whom it was very easy to work. His Royal Highness had always shown great consideration in allowing me to carry on, simultaneously with my military duties, those I had to perform for the Foreign Office, and the missions I had had to execute in Egypt. This kindness he further extended when I came upon the Headquarters Staff, by allowing me still to absent myself from the War Office in order to carry out the important civil work of which I had so long been in charge; in addition to which my

attendance at the various meetings of the Royal Commission on Tonnage made a further inroad upon my time. As D.A.G., I was exceedingly fortunate in having for my Assistant Adjutant General, Lt. Col. Micklem R.E. He was a very able and efficient officer, and a charming companion in every respect, so that when I had to absent myself as above mentioned I could feel perfect confidence that my office work was thoroughly well carried out.

Among my other duties about this time was that of advising the Royal Commission of Colonial Defence, on matters connected with the Suez Canal. This brought me in contact with the Earl of Carnarvon, who was Secretary of State for the Colonies, and Chairman of the Commission.

The Pay and Promotion Committee, on which I had been serving for so many months, also continued to occupy my time. It might well have been called a "Committee for committing suicide"!, as the recommendations we had to make, in order to harmonise the promotion of the Royal Artillery and the Royal Engineers with the existing state of things in the Army, necessarily involved fixing periods at which officers would have to retire. Hitherto, we were accustomed to serve as long as our health permitted, and when I joined the service, I had no idea of leaving, until I should be incapacitated by infirmity. The abolition of purchase in the Army had made it evident that promotion would be so slow that no officer could arrive at superior rank until he became old, and thus among the junior ranks a feeling of despair of ever rising would be engendered. We, in the Ordnance Corps of the Artillery and Engineers, where there was no acceleration of promotion by purchase, had felt this disadvantage for many years; in fact the first Company to which I was appointed in 1845, had a Captain who passed his examination for a Commission in the year 1815. Owing to the peace reductions after Waterloo, he did not get it till ten years after that, so that he was a man of some forty six years of age when he became a second Captain. That, perhaps, was an extreme case, but it was an example of the desperate slowness of promotion at that time. I had been fortunate in many ways as I became a Captain after only ten years service and then the Crimean War had quickened promotion considerably, but now nearly twenty five years had elapsed, and promotion was getting very slow indeed. The abolition of purchase was likely to bring the whole of the Army into a similar condition, and the principle of obliging officers to retire who had not reached a certain rank by a certain age, had been adopted generally for the Army. Our Committee was now proceeding to make this applicable to the Royal Artillery, and Engineers, and therefore, I had before me in these recommendations the improbability of ever arriving myself at the rank of General, and the certainty of having to leave the Service when I might still have many years of good work left in me. Being on the Headquarters Staff gave me many opportunities of moving about the country with the Duke for inspections, at the different garrisons; this I found very agreeable and interesting. My Official position, and connection with the

Foreign Office, led to our being invited to many State and official functions.

After a good deal of diplomatic correspondence, I had the satisfaction of bringing together the International Technical Commission for the improvement of the entrance to the Alexandria harbour, for which I had the authority of the Khedive. It was composed of my colleagues M. Laroche and M. Dionisio, the French and Italian Engineers of the Alexandria Harbour Commission, to which I had added by permission, my friend Col. Pasley C.B. R.E., who was the Director of Works at the Admiralty, and had great experience of such questions as that with which we had to deal. During the month of August we had several meetings, and drew up detailed plans and estimates, which we despatched on the 24th. August to Riaz Pasha, the Grand Vizier of the Khedive. Unfortunately for us, this report which we had signed on the 22nd. August, must have arrived in Cairo just at the beginning of the troubles with Arabi Pasha, with the result that it was "pigeon-holed" and nothing was done for several years towards carrying out our proposals. Although the plan we recommended as the best was not adopted, on account of its cost, the year 1900 saw the alternative scheme carried out to the very great improvement of the harbour. My share in this is that of having vanquished, in 1880, the great objections the Egyptian Government had to the work to be done. The influence we have acquired in Egypt since then would undoubtedly have caused this opposition to disappear eventually, but it was a diplomatic success for me. My brother officer, Sir Colin Scott Moncrieff, has the credit of having resuscitated our proposals, and of having successfully carried out the works which produced the desired effect. The consent which in 1880 I had obtained from the merchants of Alexandria to the tariff of dues for re-payment of the cost of the works, had, however, become nullified by the dreadful losses they sustained in the bombardment of Alexandria by our fleet in 1882, and by the destruction of the European quarter of the town caused by Arabi Pasha's followers.

In the early autumn of 1881, I had the pleasure of shooting my first grouse at Dunskey in Wigtonshire, with Col. Gerard Smith. My daughter accompanied me in this visit, and from Dunskey we went into Aberdeenshire where we spent a pleasant few days with Dean Ranken at Old Deer.

A severe chill troubled me a good deal this autumn, obliging me to spend some time at Bournemouth to get rid of it.

Among our near Neighbours in London were Sir Edmund and Lady Henderson, (the latter I had known since she was a child). Opposite us were Col. Leach R.E. and his family, next door Percy Smith's father and mother, and a very old friend, Lady Bovill, whose father was my Godfather, lived not far from us. our house in Gledhow Gardens was very spacious and we were always delighted to see any of our friends

from the country, who would come and stay with us during the five years we were there.

About a year after I had taken up my duties as D.A.G. R.E. I was made a member of a Committee appointed by the Secretary of State for War "to enquire into certain points in connection with a proposed Sub-Marine Tunnel to connect, for railway purposes, the English and French coasts."

Major General Sir Archibald Alison Bart. K.C.B. was Chairman, three officers of Royal Engineers, two of Royal Artillery, two Civil Engineers and the Chemist to the War Department, were members. We were directed to "make a full and exhaustive investigation, from a scientific point of view, into the practicability of closing effectually the projected tunnel" and to report "what appliances, whether of destructive or obstructive or of flooding -- should be provided -- so that the use of the tunnel in every imaginable contingency may be beyond doubt, denied to an enemy."

The first meeting took place on the 27th. February 1882. On the 3rd. March we went to Dover, and the next day first inspected St. Margaret's Bay where it was intended by one project, that a tunnel should debouch. In the afternoon we went down into the tunnel which the S.E. Railway had already begun and carried some distance under the sea. The tunnel was being rapidly driven by a very effective boring machine worked by compressed air, - this was the invention of Major Beaumont R.E., whom, as a young Lieutenant, I had taken to the East, as one of my Captains in the Turkish Contingent Engineers. One great advantage of this machine was that the compressed air escaped after each stroke upon the chalk through which the tunnel was being driven, and ventilated the gallery completely, so that, although we were twelve hundred yards from the shaft down which we had descended near the water line, the air was perfectly fresh.

As an Engineer I found the project very fascinating, and its working, so far, practical and likely to succeed, but from a political point of view I was strongly opposed to the tunnel, because I believed that it would, if constructed, be a great danger to this country. I did not apprehend that an invasion in force could be made through it, but I believed that there would be a great danger of the English mouth being seized by a body of troops suddenly thrown across the Channel at night, of sufficient strength to hold its own for 24 hours. During this time overpowering reinforcements could be pushed through the tunnel and a strong army formed which would be superior to any forces we could muster. With the tunnel in their hands the enemy would be able to keep its army fully supplied and constantly re-inforced without any fear of our Navy.

During our visit to Dover, Col. F. Brine R.E. who was a great enthusiast about ballooning, was bent upon making an ascent at Canterbury, passing over the Channel, and alighting in France. His wife paid a visit at my

office in Pall Mall to beg me to give him orders not to run the risk. This I declined to do, and, as it happened, he chose the very day that we were at Dover to make his attempt. As we left the sunlight to descend into the tunnel, the Colonel's balloon was sailing gaily in mid-air above us, but when we came out again it was nowhere to be seen. We went into Dover and heard that the balloon had collapsed, and on going down to the Admiralty Pier we saw the Colonel and his half-drowned balloon arrive. Happily for him his misfortune had been seen by the people on board the boat from Calais and he had been picked up, a wetter and, let us hope, a wiser man!

On our return to London we resumed our sittings and the taking of evidence. From 27th. February to 15th. May, we held 21 meetings, and our report was signed on the latter day.

It indicated several modes by which the tunnel could be destroyed in the event of danger; either by blowing in the sides, destroying the ventilation, or flooding the channel. My colleagues were most of them in favour of the Tunnel and the Report was rich in measures for neutralizing its danger.

My opportunity came when the concluding paragraph was discussed; it ran as follows:

"How far will these proposals, beyond reasonable doubt, secure the use of the tunnel in every imaginable contingency being denied to an enemy?

In their opinion the application of the Principles and Measures adopted by them will, with that amount of intelligence, fidelity and vigilance which the State has a right to expect from its servants, effect this -- but it must always be borne in mind that, in dealing with physical agencies, an amount of uncertainty exists which can never be wholly eliminated. It is only by the multiplication of means, which can be placed under the control of independent authorities acting from different localities, that this element of uncertainty can be to the greatest extent minimized, and this consideration your Committee have steadily kept in view in the recommendations which they have made."

The Report also contained the following: Fortifications.

1. It is undesirable that the tunnel should emerge within range of effective fire from the sea. I therefore submitted the following as a Minority Report which I requested might be appended to that of the Committee:

Whilst concurring with the majority of the Committee in certain of the principles which they have adopted, and in the measures which they recommend for the purpose of making the tunnel useless to an enemy, I should be wanting in my duty if I did not record my dissent from one

very important principle which they have adopted, and express an opinion on the efficiency of the measures proposed, which goes further than that expressed by my colleagues.

The Committee have laid down as a principle that the tunnel should not emerge within range of effective fire from the sea.

I am strongly of opinion that the exit of the tunnel should be under the fire of our fleet, for the following reason:

The principal objection to the tunnel is that if, in spite of all the precautions taken to prevent its falling into an enemy's hands, it should ever do so, it may become a safe communication, by which he can draw supplies and reinforcements from the Continent undisturbed by our fleet. one of the wisest means of obviating this danger would appear to be, to bring the tunnel-mouth under the fire of the fleet; so that, even if, by a temporary command of the Channel, an enemy gained possession of Dover and the tunnel, our fleet, on regaining the command of the sea, could make it impossible for the enemy to enjoy the undisturbed line of communication which is the real danger. For this reason no defences should be erected, as suggested by the Committee, to protect the land approaches to the Tunnel from fire from the sea, for the Country would have more to hope for from its own Navy than to fear from hostile ships.

This by no means implies that the first duty of the fleet is to be the defence of the tunnel; but that it shall not be shut out of the possibility of retrieving a national disaster, should such occur.

If we should permanently lose the command of the sea, it would matter little whether there were a tunnel or not, our place among the nations would be lost; but until that unhappy moment arrives, I believe that our fleet could always most effectively neutralize any advantage an enemy might gain by seizing it. I therefore entirely and emphatically dissent from this conclusion of the Committee, which I did my best to prevent.

The Committee have, in obedience to the instructions of the Secretary of State, indicated several means by which the tunnel may be made absolutely useless to an enemy either for a time or for all time, and they have considered, and reported on, the various appliances by means of which the use of the tunnel may be denied to an enemy.

But in my opinion these appliances cannot be relied upon to deny the use of the tunnel to an enemy "in every imaginable contingency", because in war the best devised schemes of attack or defence frequently fail, and the unexpected event decides the issue. Some sudden combination inspired by genius, carried out by daring bravery, and even assisted by treachery, incompetency, or unpreparedness on the part of the defenders, may defeat the most complete and apparently unassailable plan of defence. History furnishes many examples of fortresses, reputed impregnable, having been thus surprised.

A long period of peace and continued security might engender carelessness in maintaining the many delicate arrangements for the destruction of the tunnel proposed by the Committee, whilst a misplaced economy might lead to forts being left unarmed or insufficiently manned.

Provide therefore, as we may, against danger from the tunnel, I am unable to satisfy myself that it will be "rendered absolutely useless to an enemy in every imaginable contingency."

J. STOKES, Colonel, R.E., D.A.G.

Mr. Gregory, the principal Civil Engineer on the Committee, supported me, in the following note;

I agree with the Committee in their Report generally, and in the principles and measures adopted by them, which I believe, would reduce to a minimum the dangers which would arise from the establishment of a Channel Tunnel; but I regret that I cannot agree with the Committee in their answer to the question

"How far will these proposals, beyond reasonable doubt, secure the use of the tunnel, in every imaginable contingency, being denied to an enemy?"

The conditions of safety implied by the terms used are so absolute that I do not see how they can be fully attained; and I submit that the nature and amount of unavoidable danger are not adequately set forth in the concluding paragraphs of the Report of the Committee, but are more correctly described in the concluding paragraphs of the Minute of Colonel Sir John Stokes.

Charles Hutton Gregory.

Whereupon the Committee modified their concluding paragraph as follows;

In conclusion your Committee have now only to record their answer to the question:

How far will these proposals, beyond reasonable doubt, secure the use of the tunnel in every imaginable contingency being denied to an enemy?

In their opinion the application of the Principles and Measures adopted by them should, with that amount of intelligence, fidelity and vigilance which the State has a right to expect from its servants, effect this; but it must always be borne in mind that, in dealing with physical agencies an amount of uncertainty exists which can never be wholly eliminated and that it is

equally impossible to eliminate human fallibility. It is only by the multiplication of means, which can be placed under the control of independent authorities acting from different localities, that this element of uncertainty can be to the greatest extent minimized, and these considerations your Committee have steadily kept in view in the recommendations which they have made. But they cannot disregard the possibility that a long period of peace and uninterrupted tranquility might engender carelessness in maintaining in good working condition the arrangements applied to the partial or complete destruction of the tunnel, and might lead to fortifications being left so inefficiently armed or insufficiently manned as not to be secure against surprise. They therefore desire to record their opinion that it would be presumptuous to place absolute reliance upon even the most comprehensive and complete arrangements which can be devised, with a view of rendering the tunnel absolutely useless to an enemy in every imaginable contingency.

It adopted the conclusions of the second part of my separate remarks, so I consented to omit them, though I felt bound to maintain the first part regarding the distance of the tunnel-mouth from the sea.

I have always maintained that my action in the matter had an important influence in checkmating the Channel Tunnel project, as I think the following remarks will show.

In 1883 a joint Select Committee, of five members from the House of Lords and five from the House of Commons, sat, from the 26th. April to the 10th. July, on which day Draft Reports were submitted by the Chairman, Lord Lansdowne, and by six of the Members of the Committee. Most of these Reports, even Lord Lansdowne's which favoured the construction of the Tunnel, dwelt upon the concluding paragraphs of the Report made by the War Office Committee, on which too Lord Wolseley, in his important evidence before the Select Committee, more than once dwelt with emphasis. In the end Lord Lansdowne's draft report was rejected by six votes to four; on three of the other six drafts the votes were equally divided, and the remaining three were withdrawn. The Committee therefore adopted the following Resolution; "That the Committee have had under their consideration the several Draft Reports which have been laid before them, but it has been found that no one of the said Draft Reports receives the entire approval of a majority of the Committee. The majority of the Committee are, however, of opinion that Parliamentary sanction should not be given to a Sub-Marine Communication between England and France. The individual Reports of the Majority, together with the Report of the Minority, who are of a contrary opinion, are appended to this Report."

It was then voted "that the above Resolution be the Report of the Committee," and it was communicated to each House of Parliament. I cannot of course pretend that it was only the passages above referred to which influenced the majority to vote against the Tunnel. Nearly six

hundred pages of evidence were taken, comprising the opinions of the most distinguished military men of the country, but these opinions differed diametrically on the essential points, whereas most agreed on the possibility of the wisest and most scientific preventive measure being frustrated by carelessness engendered by long security. And, as I have said above, even the Minority Report of the Chairman "expressed concurrence in the paragraph with which the Military Committee have concluded their Report, and which, considering the terms in which they were entrusted with their enquiry, they could not with propriety have omitted."

In the month of May 1882, the troubles in Egypt connected with Arabi began to be acute, and I was called into Council at the Admiralty and the Foreign Office in connection with them. In these conferences I used to meet Lord Granville, Lord Northbrook, Lord Dufferin, Lord Hartington and Mr. Gladstone. On one occasion, after the bombardment of Alexandria, we were discussing matters with Lord Granville and I made a remark as to what we should do while we were at war, when he rounded on me and said, "We are only acting as police for the Khedive." I was much amused by this gloss put upon our Naval and Military operations, as we were then preparing a large force to go out. The organisation and equipment of this force entailed a great deal of labour upon me at this time though the decision was not made known till the 20th. July.

Later in the year, when the expedition arrived in Egypt, and after the withdrawal of the French Government from any share in the operations, the actions of our forces on the Suez Canal and the attempt of M. de Lesseps to interfere between them and Arabi Pasha led to the British Directors having much work in Paris in order to avert trouble with the Suez Canal Company. The events in Egypt had led to Lord Granville making an appeal to me to bring about some change in our relations with the Company, with a view to giving us greater control over their administration. I did not think it feasible, and told him so, but promised to do my best to bring about the improvement he desired. At this time many complaints were being made against the Suez Canal Company for the inefficiency of their control, for the number of groundings taking place in the Canal and for the high charges. Moreover, an agitation was being got up to form a Company to cut a second Canal. All this led to very long discussions between Sir Rivers Wilson, Mr. Standen, the Lesseps, and myself. The friction between M. de Lesseps and the Naval and Military authorities on the Canal, during the operations, had made the maintenance of friendly relations between ourselves and the Company very difficult. We managed, however, to keep them on a friendly footing, but it was only by the exercise of much forbearance and by mutual goodwill that we were able to bring about negotiations with the Company in the sense of the instructions which Lord Granville had given us.

In the month of December 1882, we had begun to produce some impression and through the early months of 1883 we got into shape an arrangement with the Suez Canal Company, under direct instructions, principally from Mr. Childers as Chancellor of the Exchequer.

During the month of June we had frequent conferences at the Foreign Office and the Treasury, and most difficult negotiations between H.M. Government and the Company. At length the Lesseps came over to London and had personal conferences with Shipowners. On the 23rd. July Mr. Gladstone made his statement in the House of Commons.

The following letter was received from him in reference to these matters.

10. Downing Street,

Whitehall,

30. July 1883.

Dear Sir,

Mr. Gladstone is obliged to you for the message which you have conveyed to him from M. de Lesseps through Mr. Standen. It is Mr. Gladstone's hope to find an opportunity in tonight's debate of referring to your and Sir R. Wilson's services connected with the Suez Canal Directorate: and whether or not such an opportunity occur, I know Mr. Gladstone is most sensible of the value and use of your work in connection with the Canal Company, both generally from 1875 downwards, and in regard specially to the recent proceedings.

I remain,
Yours faithfully,

E.W. Hamilton.

Col. Sir John Stokes. K.C.B.

The upshot of all our negotiations for the improvement of relations between the Canal Company and the shipping interest came to this, that Lord Granville recommended M. de Lesseps to treat direct with the Shipowners, which he did later in this year.

During the Autumn M. de Lesseps, acting upon the recommendations of Lord Granville, opened communication direct with the Shipowners, and came over to discuss with the leading men among them the various suggestions and complaints which they had made. one of the suggestions put forward by them had been the construction of a second canal which should compete with that of M. de Lesseps.

He maintained stoutly that the concession which he had obtained to construct the Suez Canal, gave him a monopoly of all rights of that kind across the Isthmus, and that no other association could legally obtain from the Sultan or the Khedive the concession for a similar enterprise.

M. de Lesseps and his son Charles both came over to England early in November, and were invited to the Lord Mayor's dinner at the Guild-hall on the 9th., at which I was present, and had, I suppose, the unique experience of hearing a Greek quotation in the speech of Mr. Gladstone, capped by the Lord Mayor, Sir Robert Fowler, with a further Greek quotation!

The de Lesseps were very well received in England, and visited the principal ports where they held meetings with the shipowners, who finally appointed a large committee in London to treat with them. The old man left England on the 24th. Novr, and his son Charles carried on the discussions.

On the 23rd. November I had a very interesting interview with Mr. Gladstone, in consequence of telegrams received from Egypt as to pressure being put upon the Egyptian Government to favour the construction of a second canal. The conversation of which I immediately afterwards took a note, ran as follows -

Mr. Gladstone: "The position taken up by H.M. Government in Egypt gives them no right to interfere in any internal question between the Egyptian Government and the possessors of private rights and privileges. The Egyptian Government would be guided entirely by their own view of such rights. I can emphatically say that, taking our stand on this principle, no pressure has been, or will be, put upon the Egyptian Government by the Government of Her Majesty. The French Consul General is probably under some misapprehension . "

Sir John Stokes: "His telegram receives some confirmation in one received this morning by Sir Rivers Wilson which mentions that the Anglo-Egyptian Bank has offered the Egyptian Government ten millions sterling to construct a second Canal. May I assure M. de Lesseps that H.M. Government will not only put no pressure on the "Khedive but will not allow pressure to be put upon him?"

Mr. Gladstone: "Our position is what I have described to you. We stand entirely aloof. You may say that we have not put, and shall not put any pressure whatever on the Khedive or his Government."

Sir John Stokes: "But the world at large, and particularly the French, will not believe that any pressure put is not countenanced by H.M. Government, they will not believe in the neutrality of the English Government."

Mr. Gladstone: "I do not say neutrality, I say absolute non-interference. Of course, (and you need not say this to M. de Lesseps) I have no doubt that the Egyptian Government being pressed for money, are looking very narrowly into their rights as regards the Canal, and will be glad to discover that they can obtain some pecuniary compensation for fresh concessions. I speak from memory only, and with the reserve which I always maintain when considering matters not in my own Department, but I have no recollection of any report tending to show that the Egyptian Government claim to have any other right as regards M. De Lesseps' Canal than that of a fresh concession being required for a second canal. I have stated in the House of Commons and elsewhere that M. de Lesseps' claim to exclusive right must be the subject of a judicial decision. Is not that your opinion?"

Sir John Stokes: "Yes, certainly."

Mr. Gladstone: "Personally, I have a strong feeling that in equity M. de Lesseps' claim is good, and I moreover think that his Company can carry out the work more economically than any other body."

Sir John Stokes: "M. de Lesseps has made good progress with his direct negotiations with the Ship-owners and others, but he feels himself paralysed by the telegram he has received, and inconvenienced by the attitude of *The Times*. He says that if he comes to an agreement with the Ship-owners and is supported by H.M. Government, he does not doubt that the "Times" opposition will cease: but if there should be anything like want of support from H.M. Government, what he is doing would become useless. M. de Lesseps has since the summer, been acting very loyally towards us, and has abstained from exciting any feeling in France or going to his own Foreign Office."

Mr. Gladstone: "I quite recognise that M. de Lesseps has behaved extremely well and I have never doubted, if he and the Ship-owners come together, that, as the parties really interested, they would come to an understanding. Is he pleased with his dealings with them?"

Sir John Stokes: "Very much so, he found them reasonable and straightforward, and, if things go on as they have begun,

he expects to arrive at a complete understanding with them. M. de Lesseps thinks that, in such an event, he should see a member of H.M. Government. Would that enter into your views?"

Mr. Gladstone: "Yes, I have always maintained that he should first come to an understanding, and as I stated in Parliament, H.M. Government would then be in a position to take up the question again. He should see Lord Granville, or Mr. Childers, but I fear that they are not in Town. What are the conclusions come to as regards the improvement of the Canal? Are they in favour of a second Canal or of widening the present one?"

Sir John Stokes: "This point is one of great difficulty and has not been touched in the discussion. It is reserved for a Commission of experts. The understanding has borne upon the reduction of dues and increased share in the direction."

Mr. Gladstone: "Very good, What is your own opinion as to the necessity of a new concession as between widening or a second Canal?"

Sir John Stokes: "I think that for widening the Canal or making a second water-way under the same water surface, no new concession could be required, as it would be for a second Canal on the best lines. (I then explained the second water-way) In these discussions Sir R. Wilson and I have held quite aloof but we have of course been kept acquainted with all that is going on with a view to keeping H.M. Government *au fait* with what was passing."

Mr. Gladstone: "You have taken quite the correct course. Your position has been most difficult and delicate. I may almost say you have been in a false position, for, as Directors, you have had to defend the interests of the Company and, as representing H.M. Government, which again represents so many various interests, you have had to defend those interests."

M. Charles de Lesseps was staying in my house and therefore I knew, day by day, everything that was passing. The upshot of his discussions with the shipowners, which one might almost say were carried on day and night, (on one occasion he only came in at three o'clock in the morning) ended on the 30th of November in a complete understanding being arrived at. It was agreed that the Company should either enlarge the present Canal or construct a second channel as might be hereafter determined. In order to arrive at a proper decision in this matter a Commission of Engineers and Shipowners was to be appointed to go into

the question, and not less than half of the members were to be English. In addition to three Directors nominated by H.M. Government, seven new Directors, chosen from among British Shipowners and Merchants were to be admitted as members of the Board. These English Directors were to form a Consultative Committee to meet in London. The last surtax of 50 centimes was definitely to disappear on the 1st. January 1884. from which date also the Company was to abolish all pilotage dues and, from the 1st. January 1885, to reduce the dues by a further 50 centimes. Arrangements were also to be made under which there would be a further reduction as traffic increased, until a maximum of five francs a ton was reached. There were also other points provided for which I need not recapitulate.

The Committee of Shipowners consisted of James Laing, elected Chairman; Thomas Sutherland, Chairman of the P. and O. Company; William McKinnon, of the British India; J.B. Westray, Secretary of the Association of Steamship Owners trading in the East; John Glover and R.S. Donkin.

This proposal was generally agreed to by H.M. Government on condition that the three official directors should form part of the London Committee. The arrangement has proved an eminently satisfactory one. The Commission of Experts named in this first article, (among whom, was my friend Sir Charles Hartley,) visited the Canal in 1884 and made recommendations for its improvement; one half of which have now (1900) been carried out at a cost of four millions sterling, which was raised by a loan on the Paris exchange, and gradually issued as money was required.

As indicated in my conversation with Mr. Gladstone, my part in this matter was that of careful watching, and private assistance to Charles de Lesseps in our discussions. What came out pre-eminently in this affair was, that if Charles de Lesseps had, six months earlier been willing to make to the Shipowners one fourth of the concessions he eventually did make, the agreement with H.M. Government in the month of June would not have encountered the opposition which it did, and the Company would have been in a far better position.

The agreement with the Shipowners was, however, a subject of very acute opposition in Paris. Some of M. de Lesseps' warmest supporters in the Council highly disapproved of the concessions made, and there is no doubt that both his position, and that of his son Charles, were very much shaken by the concessions they had made to English trade. Eventually, however, by tact and verbal explanations, opposition was overcome, and the general meeting of Shareholders held for the purpose, approved the agreement. The concession thus made was of this nature--We had always looked upon the Agreement in the light of a convention strictly binding upon the Suez Canal Company, but, as the de Lesseps explained it to their Shareholders, to make it palatable to them--it was only called "a

programme of what was to be done", and in that way it was accepted. I must say that the Company to have so loyally adhered to the programme that it has really had all the force of a binding Convention. Although H.M. Government, as the Shareholders of such a very large portion of the Capital, namely two fifths, naturally have very great influence and weight in all the discussions of the Council, they have not, technically, more voting power than any holder of 250 shares, because the statutes of the Company limit the extreme voting capacity of any one Power to ten votes. Any number of shares beyond two hundred and fifty gives no extra voting power.

The agreement was brought before a meeting of shareholders on the 12th. March 1884 and was carried by the small majority of 82 out of 1604 votes. So great was the opposition that the election of the additional English directors could not then be attempted, as a two-thirds majority was necessary for that. At the end of May a further general meeting of shareholders was held, by which time efforts made had won over many of them, and all the questions submitted were carried by large majorities. The original number of Directors, thirty-two, which had been reduced some years before, was restored, and enabled the seven English Directors to be added to the Board.

I had an active share in all these transactions, which took up a large part of my time. My correspondence with the Government and the de Lesseps was very frequent, and entered into great detail, as the public documents of the time show.

The year 1884 was a very busy one to me at the War Office, and I could ill afford the time for the affairs of the Canal.

One afternoon I had a visit from General Gordon of Chinese fame, who told me that he had been with Lord Granville all the afternoon, and had consented to go out to Khartoum as Governor-General, to endeavour to make head against the Mahdi movement: Lord Granville being confident of his popularity and influence with the Arabs of the Soudan. He explained the situation to me during a long and interesting conversation, and was full of hopes of success in the near future and of anxiety to resume the work in Africa which he had undertaken for King Leopold.

In May of this year we had the pleasure of welcoming home my brother Frank and his wife who were on a visit from Australia. They arrived on the 12th. May and sailed again on the 18th. December. My brother had come home to try to form a Company to acquire a very large property in Australia which he had taken up. This, through some mismanagement for which he was not responsible, he failed to effect. It had caused him a great deal of trouble, worry and anxiety, and in passing through the Red Sea the great heat, combined with that strain upon his health, brought on a seizure which laid him low for the rest of his life.

In this Spring I attained the rank of Major-General, which I had never expected or thought possible under the new regulations. Happily for me, Mr. Childers had introduced an article in the warrant, under which an officer especially required for certain duties, could be retained beyond his age limit, and made a Major-General. We all said at the time that this was for the sake of Sir Andrew Clark; he certainly was the first officer to benefit by it. H.R.H. who had been such an excellent Chief to me at the Horse-Guards, considered that my services were necessary at this time, and to prevent my being shelved this promotion was granted me. It was a complete surprise to me to reach this rank, and the way in which it was done was especially gratifying.

In this same year I took up another work which has thrown a great deal of labour on my shoulders. At the request of my old friend, Canon Scarth, and of Lady Strangford, I joined the Committee which had been formed for erecting a Hospital at Port Said for the benefit of the numerous English seamen passing through the Canal. The accommodation at that time in the Egyptian hospital was so disgraceful that it was not a fit place for English seamen. Eventually I became Chairman and Treasurer of this Committee, and have had the entire working of it since the year 1886 when the building was first begun.

An important event which occurred during the year 1885 was the signing of the Convention neutralizing the Suez Canal. I had a good deal of correspondence with Ministers on this and other Suez Canal subjects.

In this year we had the pleasure of a long visit from my son Alfred, who came back from the Cape, where he had taken part in the expedition to Bechuanaland, commanded by Colonel Sir Charles Warren. R.E. Sir Charles had taken him up as a Special Service Officer and from Mafeking dispatched him on a mission into Matabeleland, where he carried out his duties very satisfactorily and was well reported upon for it. By some misunderstanding in the Artillery of five, he was summoned back by telegram to take up his appointment in the Royal Horse Artillery in India, which my friend Col. Hay had kindly given him, but for which there was no immediate hurry. He was thus recalled from his Special Mission before he had had time to complete it. However, it gave us the pleasure of having him in England for some months.

In July of this year I got a chill and was prostrated by a return of the Danube fever which I had had nearly thirty years before. This laid me up for some time.

It was a satisfaction to me at this time that Mr. W.H. Smith, with whom I had so much to do in Suez Canal matters, when he was Secretary to the Treasury, became Secretary of State for War during Lord Salisbury's short administration.

I had a pleasant trip to South Wales this year with my son Alfred. We had much lawntennis, and the excitement of an otter hunt in the Cleddan, also a visit to Fishguard to see the James Owens, where I met Hugh Owen, late of the 73rd Regiment who had been at my wedding in '49. We also saw St. David's with its interesting old Cathedral and Bishop's Palace. We then went to Shrewsbury, and Harrogate, where Edith was laid up with rheumatism, and to Derby where Gina and her husband were living at the "Outwoods" a house which had been lent them for a few months at Duffield. I also visited Cobham and Nurstead.

At the end of this year I was put on another Committee on the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich, under the Presidency of Lord Morley. We made some important recommendations which were ultimately carried out. My time as D.A.G., R.E., was now drawing to a close, but the Duke wished me to continue it for three months beyond the five years. The year 1885 at the War Office, was marked by the careful development in many respects, of the organisation of the Royal Engineers. At the end of the year Col. Salmond had become my Assistant Adjutant General. It was a great regret to me that Col. Micklem's time had come to an end, but I found Salmond a most efficient successor to him in all our work. His clear head, accuracy and industry, were most valuable to me.

In March 1886 I had to break up my household in London, as, not anticipating that I should be there for more than my five years, I had not taken a longer lease of the house.

My wife had been lying all these years helpless, unable to speak or do anything for herself, but her health generally was better at this time. I was now looking out for a house where I could establish my family when my War Office duties ceased. Having determined not to remain in London I was trying to find a house in the country. In the meantime, Gina undertook to have her Mother with her until I could get settled: therefore, in the middle of March we moved her down to Derby. In my expeditions to the country I had seen one house at Hayward's Heath which pleased me, but seemed rather more than I required, and I paid numerous visits to other places. Eventually, hearing that my brother Frank and his wife wished to come to England, I decided to take the house at Hayward's Heath, as it would enable me to make a home for them. He had not only been smitten down in health but his affairs had all gone wrong, and it was a matter of importance to him to get a home.

My term at the War Office came to an end on 1st. July this year. I had taken up the post with misgivings, and unwillingness to leave Chatham but I must say that I was sorry to leave it for this also meant the end of my Military career. I ought to have mentioned earlier that within a year or so after my appointment, the post of Inspector-General of

Fortifications became vacant, and H.R.H. was very anxious that I should succeed Genl. Galway, who had been, as we thought, rather unfairly ousted from that position, but the same influence which placed Col. Clarke in my shoes at Chatham, put him into this, the highest position in the Corps. That office would not be vacant again till it was too late for me to be appointed to it, as I could only remain in the Service under the new regulations for a few months, and, although I had the hearty goodwill of the Duke I could not be appointed as it was not to the interest of the Service that any man should hold so important a post for so short a time. Therefore, the conclusion of my service at the Horse-Guards was the end of my Military duties altogether.

I was very thankful that I still had the important appointment under the Foreign Office in connection with the Suez Canal Company, which ensured me an active life for sometime to come and a welcome addition to my income.

On July 1st. I was present at an interesting ceremony, at which I played rather an anomalous part. This was the wedding of my wife's sister, Mimi - Mrs. Robertson Ross. She married Colonel Macdonald of St. Martin's Abbey, Perth. She asked me to give her away and as she, being a widow, had no bridesmaids, I was to act as bridesmaid as well as parent, and found it rather difficult to hold my hat, the Bride's bouquet, and various other ladies' adornments - gloves and so on.

As I was not to get possession of the house at Hayward's Heath till the end of August, my daughter Edith and I took a very comfortable lodging in my dear old native village of Cobham, where we were near all our dear old friends. This made a very pleasant surrounding for us, and here we stayed for six weeks and were joined by my youngest daughter, Con. We had towards the later part of the time to attend to all the arrangements for our move.

On the 26th. August I met my brother and his wife at the docks on their arrival, and established them at Sir Charles Hartley's rooms in Pall Mall, which he had kindly placed at their disposal, and Edith, Con and I took up our quakers in lodgings at Hayward's Heath while our furniture was moved. We finally welcomed my brother and his wife home to "Good Rest", on the 10th. September, 1886.

We went down to Hayward's Heath, in the first instance, thinking that we knew no one in the neighbourhood, but we soon discovered two or three families with whom I had been connected in the old times. At Cuckfield we found Captain and Mrs. Farmer, whose daughter Ella married Charlie Conybeare, the son of a very old friend, and near them was living Mrs. Hilton, the daughter of Admiral Sherriff who had been Supt. in Chatham Dockyard in the early forties, and whom I had met at my father's house at Cobham. At Lindfield was a Mr. Arbouin, whose Uncle had been a great friend of Mr. Maynard's, and lived near him in Brunswick Square. Again

in another direction, at Bolney, the clergyman was Mr. McLeod whose wife was a daughter of my old friend, William Jelf. These formed a basis of acquaintance to which other neighbours were soon added. At Balcombe, too, Mr. & Mrs. Nicholl were building a new house. He was an old and intimate friend of Sir Charles Hartley. Our vicar, Mr. Wyatt was an excellent man, and our near neighbour; he had a houseful of daughters; his son Geoffrey, being his curate. We soon got into pleasant and friendly relations with these people, among whom we much appreciated Admiral Pakenham of Franklyn, for whom, and his family we had a great regard.

CHAPTER XV
The Lady Strangford Hospital
The Roburite Explosives Company
Family Matters

In my Suez Canal work, which I was carrying on as usual, I was endeavouring to bring about such an understanding between the Canal Company and the Egyptian Government as would enable the Company to carry out the recommendations of the International Commission. For this purpose I had frequent interviews in my successive visits to Paris, with Nubar Pasha who was passing some time there. After long negotiations we agreed upon a settlement which promised well.

Towards the beginning of February I started for Brindisi on my way to Egypt, charged with the mission of concluding an arrangement on these lines. I travelled with Mr. Woodall whom I had known at the War Office. Having heard that there was much small-pox at Port Said, I took the precaution of getting myself vaccinated, and it took well which did not at all add to the comfort of my journey.

Arriving at Port Said on the 16th. December I joined M. Charles de Lesseps, and there I found some old friends, Captain Blomfield, John Lennox and the Durwards.

At Cairo I lodged in the Suez Canal Offices, and at once established relations with Sir Evelyn Baring, Sir Frederick Stevenson, and several brother Officers, Col. Turner, Major Green, General Wilkie and Clery. The business upon which I had come also led 1, to intimate acquaintance Colonel Edgar Vincent, afterwards financial adviser to the Khedive, and Colonel Scott Moncrieff, R.E. who had charge of all the Public Works, more particularly the Irrigations Works.

On my voyage I had met Lady Brassey and her daughters, and I came across them again in Cairo. I found Cairo, which had changed very much since I was last there in 1879-80, occupied by British Troops. I had the pleasure of dining frequently at the R.E. mess, where I had several friends, and where, on New-Year's day, I found observed our traditional "Ladies' Dinner" of the Chatham mess!

I was glad to renew my acquaintance with Cherif and Riaz Pashas, who were, however, no longer in office; our negotiations were with Nubar Pasha, who was again at his post.

On leaving England I had received from Lord Iddesleigh letters to Sir Evelyn Baring, (now Lord Cromer) directing him to assist in our dealings with the Egyptian Government. These negotiations, carried on by M. Charles de Lesseps and myself with Nubar Pasha, at which Sir Evelyn Baring assisted, finally resulted in a complete removal of all the difficulties hitherto raised by the Egyptian Government with regard to the

new works which the Company wished to undertake. The gist of the matter was that the Company paid the Government £80,000 for some land that we really did not want, but which purchase was a form of "baksheesh" given in order to obtain what we desired.

On the 21st. December we went by train to Ismailia, in order to make a thorough inspection of the Canal. With us was M. Prevost, one of the Directors, and his friends M. and Mme Rikoff, whom I mention here as I have received great civility from them in Paris from time to time ever since. Captain Ross, R.E., one of Col. Scott Moncrieffs Staff, also accompanied us; as one of the minor questions which we had to arrange with the Egyptian Government was the sanitation of Ismailia. This was affected by certain works with which the Government had interfered.

My journey through the Canal was interesting, especially in connection with the system which we were introducing for passing ships through at night by means of the electric light.

At Port Said, independently of the Suez Canal business, I took up the question of the Lady Strangford Hospital. A short time before I left England Lady Strangford had astonished the Committee by informing them that she had erected, on the Isle of Dogs, in the Thames, a set of wooden buildings, according to a plan for the hospital which had been, so far, approved by the Committee, but which they had decided should be sent to Port Said for the approval of the Executive Committee. Lady Strangford, judging from the supineness of this local Committee during the previous two or three years, despaired of their doing anything, and, of her own motion, had made a contract with Messrs Lascelles and Sons to have the whole of the buildings made of wood and shipped to Port Said; and had then invited the Committee to go down to the Isle of Dogs to inspect them! This was a complete surprise to us, and a most unpleasant one. The contract which she had made amounted to over £1800, whereas we had in hand only £1200, and of course the transport of the buildings to Port Said and their erection was sure to cost us a further large sum. The Committee felt, however, that they could hardly throw over Lady Strangford by refusing their sanction to what she had done, she being the only lady among their number, and a very powerful supporter of the work, to the funds of which her friends had contributed largely. We thus found ourselves embarked upon a costly undertaking for which we had insufficient funds, and were placed altogether in a very difficult position. The affairs of the Hospital had been much complicated in the following way; when General Gordon was killed at Khartoum and the feeling excited throughout England was at its height, a strong Committee, at the head of which was the Prince of Wales, had been formed to decide on a suitable memorial. The Port Said Hospital Committee, at the suggestion of Admiral Inglefield, one of their number, who was on intimate terms with the Prince, had brought before H.R.H. the proposition that the Memorial should take the form of this Hospital at Port Said, for which ground had been obtained by Canon Search a few years before from the

Egyptian Government and the Canal Company, who were the joint owners. The Gordon Memorial Committee accepted the idea, and it was understood that the funds already raised for the Hospital should be handed over to them, and subscriptions were invited from the public. A working committee was formed, at the head of which was Lord Napier of Magdala, and they decided that the first thing to be done was to send out one or two members to Port Said to ascertain the conditions of the place.

Unfortunately for the hospital these Gentlemen reported very adversely to the scheme, on account of the objectionable site on which the buildings were to be erected. The consequence was that the Committee abandoned the idea of the Hospital as a Gordon Memorial, and handed back to the Hospital Committee their funds, but retained all that had been subscribed for the Memorial. As much of this had been given largely with the view to establishing a good Hospital for seamen, the Hospital Committee found themselves much the poorer for this abortive scheme, and henceforward we had to depend only on our own exertions. All this was anterior to the time at which I took an active part in the management. On inspecting the buildings at the Isle of Dogs we found that various necessary alterations and additions would increase the cost by £300 or £400, while the cost of transport to Port Said would be nearly £300. We engaged the services of a Mr. Bucknall to go out and superintend the erection of the buildings. As soon as I got to Port Said I myself inspected the site, and quite agreed with Lord Napier's delegates who had condemned it. A worse situation for a hospital could not well be conceived, and I at once set to work to try to discover a better. This I found close to the sea beyond the jurisdiction of the Canal Company, on land which had grown seaward owing to the Suez Canal works, and which the Egyptian Government had claimed. I therefore arranged with the Governor to exchange the original Hospital site for another on this acquired land. Of the land thus taken over by the Government, half the proceeds would go to them and half to the Suez Canal Company, it being their joint domain. The former, therefore claimed payment in money for half the value of the new site to the extent of £800. This the Company, represented by M. Charles de Lesseps and two other Directors, agreed to pay for us, on condition that we admitted the employees and workmen of the Company to the Hospital at half rates.

The morning of Christmas Day 1886 was occupied in fixing definitely the site of the Hospital with the Governor General of the Isthmus. I was therefore able to leave directions for Mr. Bucknall on his arrival with the Hospital buildings, which were to be set up on this excellent site, the best in Port Said for the purpose, close to the sea, with a fresh N.W. wind blowing almost constantly over it. I subsequently obtained a ratification of this arrangement from the Egyptian Government, and left Port Said feeling much more satisfied with the conditions under which our Hospital was likely to be opened. I had acted in all this matter in concert with the Local Committee, to whom

I had explained the new condition of affairs resulting from the unauthorized action of Lady Strangford. In Cairo my relations all round were of the most agreeable nature, and M. Charles de Lesseps and I carried all the principal points which we had gone out to arrange with the Government. On our return we parted company at Brindisi, as I wished to halt for a few days at Florence, where my sister-in-law and niece were staying. I accordingly joined them in that beautiful city, and had a delightful time, visiting the various picture galleries and other objects of interest in the neighbourhood. I found here my old friend Mrs. Eaton, the second daughter of my Godfather, Mr. Bolton, now a widow, and having with her several grown-up daughters.

After I had been in Florence only three days I had the bad news from home that my daughter Edith was dangerously ill, so I packed hastily and started homewards that night.

I took the route by the St. Gothard tunnel. A day or two before there had been a fresh fall of snow, and a strong frost, which gave a most exquisite beauty to the lovely scenery through which I passed. The view as we passed Lake Lugano was rendered very effective by a gentle haze through which the bright sunshine penetrated, and as we climbed the mountains by this winding line of railway the effect of the sun's rays passing through the frozen waterfalls was surprisingly brilliant, making them glow with all the prismatic colours. The line, winding through the heart of the mountains in spirals, going in at one point and coming out at another on a higher level, had a marvellous effect both in ascending and descending on the other side. During the whole day we had this enjoyment, being allowed to pass to the head of the train.

On arriving at Calais I had the grievous news of the sudden death of Lord Iddesleigh, who had been, both as Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and (when Sir Stafford Northcote) as Chancellor of the Exchequer, a most kind Chief to me for many years.

On reaching home on the 13th. January I found my Child better, though still very ill, and I was glad that I had not delayed my return.

At this time a new phase of life opened before me, for soon after arriving I received a pressing invitation to join the Board of a Company, the object of which was to cut a canal deepening the passage through the straits which separate Ceylon from the mainland of India, with a view to shortening the voyage to Calcutta. Lord Napier of Ettrick was to be Chairman of the board, on which were also Sir Frederick Haines, late Commander-in-Chief in India, Mr. Montefiore and others. This was a subject which attracted me, and I willingly consented to join the board. The scheme, however came to nothing.

Shortly afterwards I was invited to join the Board of the Hotchkiss Company, for guns and ammunition, which promised to be a very successful business, and I became a director.

It was in the latter end of January, 1887, that I was made a Vice-President of the Suez Canal Company, in recognition of the services which I had been able to render during so many years.

The Vice-Presidents are elected anew every year, after the General Meeting, but it is a tradition of the Company that a Vice-President is always re-elected, and this has been born out in my case.

Another Company which I was asked to join at this time, and of which I have been a director ever since, was the Roburite Explosives Company. This had also a technical attraction for me, as its object was the manufacture of an explosive of so safe a nature as to do away with many of the dreadful accidents which occur in coal mines from time to time. On this board I had the pleasure of finding myself associated with some old friends, namely Admiral Columb, Colonel Wray, whom I had known for many years, General Wardell and Mr. H.W. Maynard, my wife's cousin.

All this opened to me a new life; it brought me into contact with many city men, kept me fully occupied with work and made a pleasant addition to my income. The year 1887 thus opened for me with the prospect of continuing my active life: and I was enabled to make a comfortable home, which my brother and his wife now shared. We had a very nice garden and a good lawn for tennis, and altogether the life at Hayward's Heath promised to be a pleasant one. The only drawback was the distance from London. With the new duties which I had undertaken I found a daily journey from Hayward's Heath and back rather trying and I therefore used each week to sleep two or three nights in town, in order to attend to them. I lived chiefly at my Club, that dear old Club the United Service.

On the 18th. June 1887, the Hospital at Port Said was opened to receive patients. Lady Strangford had taken a leading part in finding the necessary staff to work it, and Doctor, Matron and Nurses had been engaged to go out in the spring. She herself left England in February, for the purpose of superintending the arrangements, but, unhappily, she died at Naples on her way out.

This threw upon the Committee, and especially upon me, a very heavy responsibility, as it deprived us of the experience and knowledge which she had acquired in her benevolent career, especially while nursing the sick and wounded during the Russo-Turkish War, and subsequently in establishing a hospital at Cairo.

In memory of her devoted life, and of the active part which she had taken in the Port Said Hospital scheme, we called the Hospital by her name, and it has ever since been known as "The Lady Strangford Hospital". A few figures will show the extent to which its usefulness has grown. In the first seven months of its career it admitted 97 patients, who occupied beds for 2510 days, and in the year 1899 it admitted 288 patients, and beds were occupied for 7542 days. Altogether, from June 1887 to June 1899, 2820 patients occupied beds for 63721 days.

In that time we added to the Hospital a detached building in which to receive infectious cases; and by the end of 1899, I am glad to say, we had succeeded in paying off half the original debt, and in forming a special fund for eventually building the Hospital of more solid materials. One great difficulty with which we had to contend at starting was the absence of any assured income. The only certain fund was the 3/- a day paid for each sailor by his Consul. I had from the beginning addressed circulars to all the principal Shipowners requesting them to allow each vessel, as it passed through the Canal, to pay the small sum of 10/- in support of the Hospital. This appeal was very negligently treated. Some of the more important Companies responded to my request, but the sum so contributed was not enough to ensure the efficient working of the establishment. I therefore, at the recommendation of Canon Scarth, employed an agent to go round the ports and make a personal appeal to the various shipowners. This was much more effective than letters had been; and, as the result of yearly visits, the greater proportion of owners sending vessels through the Canal have contributed either by annual subscriptions or by payments by the vessels passing through. The Hospital thus receives from £600 to £700 for individual vessels passing, and over £300 in the annual subscriptions of shipping companies and agents; while the contributions from friends, or from those who have benefitted by the Hospital, vary in amount from £30 to £130 a year. The total annual income for the last seven years has varied from £1600 to £2700, while the expenditure has varied from £1800 to £2000. The surplus has been applied to reducing the debt, keeping up the plant, and in repairs, a very heavy item.

I give all these details because those for whose benefit I write know how much of my time, during many years past, has been absorbed by the conduct of this Hospital. In fact they have all urged me to resign a responsibility which entails on me such excessive labour. I have not done this, because I believe that it would be difficult for anyone else to carry on the work under its present conditions. Some years ago I lost the active cooperation of Admiral Inglefield, who was long on the Executive Committee; and Canon Scarth, the man who originated the whole thing, has of late years been in poor health, and, living at a distance in the country, has been unable to share with me in the hard work of the Hospital. This has consisted, not only in constant correspondence with the Surgeons and Matron, but in frequently supplying vacancies in the Staff. Care has also to be taken to keep the Hospital supplied with stores,

medical and surgical appliances, material for internal and structural repairs &c. All these require personal supervision, in which experience and technical knowledge are necessary. I therefore continue this labour of love, and shall do so as long as health permits. I had contemplated giving up the Chairmanship at the beginning of the year 1900, but the excessive number of casualties among the staff showed me that I could not, with any comfort, leave the Institution to itself. I have had the most earnest and zealous support from the two Mr Stapledons at Port Said, one of whom has acted as local treasurer for many years, for even my constant superintendence would have been much at fault in carrying out the work.

This year, 1887, was the first jubilee of our beloved Queen, and I was fortunate enough to have a ticket for the Thanksgiving Service at Westminster Abbey, which, of course, one attended in full uniform. In making my way to the Abbey I luckily came across the Sandhurst Cadets, among whom was my nephew, Edward Blunt. My seat in the Abbey was near the west door, where I could see all the great functionaries awaiting the arrival of the Queen, and I had an excellent view of Her Majesty and of the procession as it passed up the nave. I got out early, and waited to see the Queen, with all her splendid retinue of princes and nobility, start back for Buckingham Palace, and I was able, being in uniform, to make my way across the park and through the crowd, and get into the United Service Club where I again saw the whole procession.

My daughter Constance saw it all perfectly from Sir Charles Hartley's rooms in Pall Mall, where I joined her after the procession had passed. We were able to witness the illuminations in the streets, and Harry Bigg-Wither and Fanny Ward were of the party. I took Con the next day to hear the Thanksgiving Service at the Abbey. Edith was at this time at Aix-les-Bains, where she had been recommended to go after her serious illness in the winter, and where, I am thankful to say, the baths were most beneficial to her. On the 10th. July Harry Bigg-Wither asked for my consent to his engagement with Constance, which I gladly gave, as I had known him from a boy, and felt sure that he would make her a good and excellent husband.

On the 16th. July I went off to Paris and there met my dear Edith on her return from Aix-les-Bains, accompanied by Miss Ranken, who had kindly gone with her to take care of her. We stopped with M. Charles de Lesseps who, in the absence of his wife, made us most comfortable. On the 17th. July he drove us out, through St. Cloud to Versailles. We visited the Trianons and the picture galleries in the Palace, the fountains etc. and returned by St. Germain to Paris. It was a lovely day, not too hot, and we passed through most interesting country. We spent a couple of days in Paris, seeing the sights etc. and got back to Hayward's Heath on the 20th. Two days later I took my youngest daughter down to Southampton (where we stayed with the Fellowes), and the next day embarked on the Union Steamship Company's "Moor" for the grand Naval Review, to be held in honour of the Queen's Jubilee.

In this vessel we passed up and down the long line of splendid ships; it was very pleasant on board, as Harry Maynard, being a Director of the Union Company, had invited many members of the Maynard family, whom we were of course delighted to see. In the evening we witnessed a splendid display of fireworks from the fleet, and returned the next day to Southampton. In the afternoon we visited Millbrook in order to see the Colvin Blunts, Harry Bigg-Wither's uncle and aunt, and there found another uncle, Col. Arthur Blunt and his wife, who were already great friends of mine and whom I was glad to see and that Constance should meet. The next day we returned home. My dear child's engagement was a great pleasure to the whole family, as we were all very fond of dear old Harry.

In August I made an interesting trip down to Wigan. The Roburite Company had been formed and the patents for the invention duly purchased, and it was of great importance to find a site for the factory in a locality offering facilities for the manufacture and distribution of the explosives to the customers, --- that is, the collieries -- where we hoped it would be used. We had employed a certain Mr. Heenan to look for a site for us. He was himself interested in the Company, being a shareholder, and he had discovered an old chemical factory at Gathurst, about four miles from Wigan, which was disused, and which he thought we might profitably acquire.

I went down to see it, and found it admirably adapted for our purpose. The old factory had a chimney and various good buildings, and across the River Douglas and the Canal (running from Wigan to Southport) was a partly wooded hillside where the factory for the explosive, the magazines etc. could well be built. It is necessary in dealing with an explosive, for such buildings to be some distance from the rest of the works. I saw at once, that by running a bridge across, at a high level from the works on the one side to the magazines etc on the other, we should be able to keep the two branches of the factory distinctly apart; and, by means of a tramway on this bridge, have very easy and rapid communication between them. Acting on my report the Board purchased the factory and obtained the lease of the land on the other side on sufficiently good terms. We now set to work to put up the necessary buildings; for which we employed Mr. Heenan for the construction of iron sheds etc.

It struck me that an excellent person to appoint as Manager of our factory, which we expected to become a very important one, would be Harry Bigg-Wither, who had for some years been working for the Danube Commission at Sulina, more especially in the Navigation Cash Office. Having known him ever since he was a boy I was satisfied he was a man of the highest ability, integrity, and an excellent accountant, with great capacity for business. I did not like the idea of my daughter going out to live on the shores of the Black Sea, so far away, and thus, feeling sure that he was the right man for the place, that he would be as likely as anyone to master all the difficulties, and to devote himself to the interests

of the Company, I first of all ascertained that he was willing to undertake the post of Manager, and then recommended him to the Board. They were glad to accept the recommendation, and have never regretted it, as he has proved himself most thoroughly competent, and has served the Company in an exceptionally valuable manner through all the difficulties and misfortunes which we have experienced from time to time.

The building of the factory gave me plenty of work, as I used to go down at intervals to inspect progress.

In this year also I made my first visit to my new colleague on the Suez Canal Directorate, Mr. James Laing. My daughter Constance and I went first to my old friends the Harrisons, at Whitburn, near Sunderland. Mrs. Harrison was a sister of my great ally, Genl. Collinson of the Engineers, and had been a very intimate friend of my wife's ever since the happy time we all spent together at Woolwich in 1855. From Whitburn we went to lunch one day with the Laings at their house "Thornhill". He was a great shipbuilder and had a very large business in Sunderland. He made a special point of taking me over the harbour works at the mouth of the Wear, he being Chairman of the Harbour Committee. But it was to his house "Etal Manor", in Northumberland, that we went on the last day of August to pay our visit to them. In this charming old place with its beautiful grounds and property all round, (which he had purchased a short time before) we spent a most agreeable fortnight. Among other delights Mr. Laing had extensive farmlands, where there was a very fine stock of partridges, so that I came in for excellent sport on the opening day and on many other days besides. After ten days we returned to Whitburn, and thence, for a very pleasant week to Shrewsbury, to stay with the Maynard Hows at "Nearwell": we then went on to Manchester to see a most interesting exhibition of pictures of the Queen's reign.

I was able to visit Mr. Heenan's works and see the buildings preparing for Gathurst. We took Derby on our way home, staying a few days with Gina and her husband and little children. I had a good deal of shooting this autumn at Cobham, Camer and about Balcombe. Near the end of the year (in the beginning of December) we installed Harry Bigg-Wither as General Manager at Gathurst. Shortly before Christmas I went down to Sandhurst, on the Duke's day, to see my nephew Edward Blunt, who was then getting his Commission.

During the year I had been appointed Visitor to the Military College at Sandhurst and the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich, which kept me pleasantly in contact with military matters, and gave me a motive for being at Sandhurst when the Duke made his inspection.

On the 29th. of this month my daughter was married and her Mother's cousin, Walsham How, then Bishop of Bedford, came down to "tie the knot". The wedding was a very quiet one, as Harry's father had died a short time before.

There is nothing very remarkable to chronicle in the first few months of 1888. It was a busy year, with my duties at Paris every month, and my visits to London for various Board meetings. In the month of June I accompanied my daughter Edith to Woodhall in Lincolnshire, where we hoped that the Iodine waters would be very beneficial to her. Whilst paying her a visit towards the end of July, I got a telegram from my son Charles, from Australia, to say that he was on his way home. This was a great surprise but a very great pleasure, as I had not seen him for nineteen years, and he was now a married man with several children. He was however, coming home alone on business, and on the 23rd. August Alfred and I went to the Docks to meet him. Alfred was the first there and sent Charles on to meet me as I came up, but, if I had not known he was coming, I should not have recognized my eldest son: for the boy with whom I had parted when he was only eighteen was now a somewhat portly man with a beard. The meeting was a very happy one, and we carried him off to Hayward's Heath at once, where his sister Gina was waiting for him. Charles only remained with us till October. We were sorry to find that he was still so susceptible to asthma, which the damp weather of October aggravated; and he left on the 19th. suffering from a dreadful attack. There was nothing more of much interest in this year. My dear Edith's health had been so indifferent, that early in 1889 I was advised to let her undergo a very serious operation. A consulting surgeon, a man of very high reputation, at Brighton, strongly recommended this step.

This year was further marked by the death of my brother Frank. I had intended going over to Paris on the morning of the 1st. August, but as my niece, Margaret, was coming up to London from Essex, I met her at the station and took her to Hayward's Heath, where I -found my brother Frank was ill in bed. The next morning I was called early and told that he was worse. I went to him and tried to support him but in five minutes he died in my arms. It was a very great shock, as I had no idea that any such change was impending. I could not but be thankful that, accidentally I had been brought home just in time to see his end, as, in the ordinary course, I should have been off to Paris before I could hear of it. He had been living a quiet, happy life with us since 1886, and, although his strength was much impaired, he seemed to enjoy the quiet life we led. His death was due to sudden seizure, similar to that which had struck him down five years before, and it was a very great blow to us all. His poor widow, who was devoted to him, was overwhelmed with grief and sorrow. We all felt that no woman could have lived a more devoted life, or taken greater care of her husband than she had done for many years. In fact, it was pathetic to see her tender anxiety for him at every moment.

Edith and I paid our usual visit to the north this year but we shrank from going to the large, merry party at Etal Manor, which I had joined annually of late. So we went to my wife's sister, Mrs Macdonald, at St. Martins Abbey, near Perth, where I had some excellent shooting. After leaving this we paid one or two other quiet visits. My life at this time was

passed in business connected with the several Companies of which I was a Director and varied by what sport I could get in the way of shooting, and, in the summer, by frequent games of Lawn Tennis, of which I was very fond, and I attribute my good health to the active life I led.

On the 22nd. April 1890, I read before the Society of Arts a paper on "The Danube and its Trade", in which I described the works which had been carried out, and the effect they had had upon the river. This paper was very well received, and an interesting discussion followed in which I was much complimented. The Society's Silver Medal was awarded to me and was presented in the following winter at a meeting of the Society, by the President Sir Richard Webster , (Attorney-General).

The spring of this year was exceedingly bitter, early in May I caught a very bad cold. I did not take sufficient care, and when I went over to Paris on the 30th. I was feeling very ill. The next day I was obliged to leave the Suez Canal Council and call in a doctor, who pronounced that I had a severe attack of pneumonia. I was so ill on the 1st. June that he recommended that my children should be sent for; and on the 2nd. Edith and Alfred arrived. I had not been made acquainted with his alarming views, and was vexed when I saw them come into the room. However, I soon realized the gravity of my condition, and was thankful to have my dear children by me at such a time. Happily before they arrived, I had taken a turn for the better, and on the 5th. Alfred returned to his duties in England leaving Edith in charge of me.

I had to keep my bed at the Hotel de l'Athenee for nearly three weeks, when I was allowed to move to M. Charles de Lesseps' house. Here I met with the kindest attention, and gradually got better. On the 28th. June I was able to start for home, and managed the journey without much fatigue. This illness was a warning to me, and Dr. Herbert impressed upon me that I must in future be very careful to avoid catching cold, as my lungs had been left in a delicate state. By degrees I took up my active life, and at the end of August was able to pay my usual visit to Etal Manor with my son Alfred. During this visit Alfred found that he could not get through life without the company of Mr Laing's daughter, Margaret, and before the end of our visit, I had the gratification of knowing that I had been, in some measure, instrumental in helping these young people to secure their happiness. Alfred fully deserved all good fortune, he had never given me an hour's real anxiety, had a high character as a soldier, and had passed through the first ten years of his professional career with a most excellent record.

On the 11th. November, I lost my dear friend Charles Pasley, I was glad to be allowed to write for the R.E. Journal the memoir of his useful and interesting life.

Towards the end of this year my dear brother's widow made up her mind to return to Australia. I had offered her a home with us for the remainder

of her days, but, although it was hard for her to go so far from the spot where her husband lay, she felt strongly drawn to her numerous brothers and sisters in Australia, for whom, as well as for their children, she had a great affection. On the 9th. January, 1891 I saw her off in the "Arcadia".

In June, 1891, to my great regret, Mr Standen, who had been my colleague on the Suez Canal Council since 1876, resigned that appointment. He had, some time before, lost his wife, was now about to marry again, and could not bear to bring his second wife to the place where he had endured so much sorrow.

In the previous winter, Sir Rivers Wilson and I had the satisfaction of obtaining for his valuable services at Paris in his appointment to a Companionship of the Bath. We had hoped that this would have induced him to reconsider his intention of resigning; he kept to his decision, however, and was succeeded by Mr Austin Lee, at that time Secretary to the Embassy, and Private Secretary to Lord Dufferin, H.B.M.'s Ambassador. His resignation was much regretted by the Council, and especially by the M.M. de Lesseps, who had great confidence in his judgement, working with him most harmoniously, and by myself as we had been for 35 years associated in public matters.

The most important family event in 1891 was the marriage of my dear son, Alfred with Margaret Laing. The wedding took place at Etal, on the 11th. August. There was a great family gathering on the occasion, the Hamiltons, Bigg-Withers, Edith and myself were present. They were married at Ford Church, about three miles from Etal.

There was nothing more of importance until the end of the year, when I saw our old friend, Miss Ranken off to Japan, travelling with her as far as Paris.

During 1892 I had considerable difficulties with some of the companies of which I was a Director, and suffered heavy losses, which made me decide to give up the house at Hayward's Heath and take a smaller one at Streatham Hill.

On the 12th. November I said good-bye to dear Alfred and his wife who were starting for India, he having got Horse Artillery. On the 18th. I moved my dear wife to Streatham Hill, where Edith and Con had for some days been preparing for us. We did not at all like the place, but had to be content there for a time.

In the early part of 1893 the death occurred of my wife's sister, Fanny Hare, it came upon us very suddenly. I was, unfortunately, prevented from attending the funeral, by an attack of ophthalmia which confined me to the house for some days.

On the 17th. June, my dear wife also died, after an illness of 16 years during the last 13 and a half of which she had been bedridden and speechless. The end when it came was, at the moment, unexpected; we had that afternoon had some friends with us for a game of croquet, little dreaming that in a few hours she would be no more. she was buried in Norwood Cemetery on the 21st. when many relations, and dear friends from Cobham and Nurstead were present, all of whom showed the warmest sympathy.

Late in this summer of 1893 I visited the Laings at Etal and the Crossmans at Cheswick, also in Northumberland, Sir William Crossman is the owner of the greater part of the Holy Isle, and he took me all over that interesting spot. He had been carrying out extensive excavations with the object of ascertaining the exact sites of the old ecclesiastical buildings, and was a guide so full of understanding and sympathy with his subject as to give me great pleasure.

Among my visits this year I went to stay with the Bakewells at Tickencote Hall, near Stamford. Whilst there I was taken over Burleigh House, where I saw some fine pictures. Among these I had much pleasure in recognizing the original of the engraving, my Mother's copy of which in Indian ink is so familiar to us all -- "Cleopatra adoring the Tomb of Mark Antony."

In this autumn I was obliged to undergo an operation for inflammation of the antrum, from which I had long suffered, supposing it to be toothache; this caused me inconvenience and discomfort for some time.

At this time Lord Rosebery sent for me, and asked me to go out to Egypt to greet the young Khedive on his first visit to the Canal. It was thought that so important an event should not be left entirely in the hands of the French Company. The large proportion of shares held by H.M. Government and our position in Egypt made it desirable that the first visit of His Highness to the Canal should be accompanied by some outward and visible sign of our predominant position in the Country. For these reasons, though at considerable personal inconvenience, I undertook the mission.

Every effort was made to give it a certain amount of éclat. An ironclad, (the Dreadnought) was sent to meet me at Port Said, and I was instructed to make her my head quarters. I travelled from London by the ordinary route, via Brindisi, and had a splendid passage to Port Said, where we arrived early in the morning on 30th. November. Captain Moore, of H.M.S. "Dreadnought", put me up most comfortably on board. We decided that he should send me in H.M.S. "Dolphin" to Ismailia, where the Khedive was to arrive from Cairo. The special function for which he came was the opening of the railway line between Ismailia and Port Said, which the Suez Canal Company had laid for the better administration of their service. M. Guichard, the President of the Company, was already

there, to make arrangements. I could detect a certain jealousy on the part of the officials, of my special mission. I did my best, therefore to disclaim any idea of interfering, and left in the hands of the President everything relating to the reception of the Khedive. At the same time the object of manifesting the predominance of England in the country, and her large interest in the Canal was fully carried out, according to Lord Rosebery's wishes. The feeling of jealousy was partly shown in the desire that no-one should appear in uniform. I insisted, however, on wearing mine, as representing H.M.'s Government on a special mission to the Khedive. This led to a good deal of amusing criticism in the local press, which was entirely French, and took every opportunity of referring to the English General's appearance.

On the arrival of the Khedive and his Ministers from Cairo he was saluted by the guns of the "Dolphin", and was met by the President, by myself, Vice President, by the other Directors, and by a number of the employees of the Company, as well as by the officers of the "Dolphin". M. Guichard made a speech of welcome, following on which I addressed His Highness on behalf of H.M. the Queen, emphasizing the welcome he had received and alluding to the fact of the British Government being the largest Shareholder of the Canal Coy. The Khedive was then entertained at a great dejeuner which was spread in tents prepared for the occasion. After this we proceeded by the new line to Port Said.

From the Khedive and from Riaz Pasha, who had been Vizier when I negotiated the opening of the Harbour at Alexandria, I met with the greatest attention and civility. The Khedive invited me to travel in his special compartment of the train on this, the ceremonial opening of the line.

On arriving at Port Said the Khedive was saluted by the guns of the "Dreadnought" and Captain Moore and his Officers waited upon His Highness, who had taken up his abode on board a mail steamer of the "Khedivial" line, appointed as his yacht for the occasion. At night Port Said was splendidly illuminated, especially noteworthy was a long procession of boats brilliantly lighted, which had a charming effect on the water.

Next morning, after returning the visits which had been paid him, the Khedive started on his return to Ismailia; he invited me and others to make the journey with him. Here there were further demonstrations in honour of the Khedive, who landed and drove round the place. From Ismailia we proceeded in his yacht to Suez, and here again, by good chance, there was an English Man-of-War ready to salute him as he came in, so that at every point of the Canal England was strongly represented. The Khedive left the next morning, 5th. December, for Cairo and after seeing him off, I returned the same evening to Ismailia on board one of the steamers of the Canal Company. I visited stations by the way, taking special note of the very successful arrangements for the passage of

vessels at night, by means of the electric light. I was also able to inspect on board an improvement on the Projector light, which was subsequently adopted.

The following day I went by special train to visit the new Fresh Water Canal, which the Company had made in order to supply Port Said in greater abundance than had hitherto been possible, after which I returned to Port Said where I remained for a couple of days, making use of this opportunity for inspecting the Lady Strangford Hospital, for which I had chosen a site on my visit to Egypt in 1886. I found everything working very satisfactorily and held consultations with the "Visitors" as to the best mode of replacing the present wooden buildings by others of substantial brick, when we should be able to procure funds for their erection.

On the 8th. December I started for Cairo, in company with Captain Moore, in order to pay a visit to Lord and Lady Cromer. We took up our quarters in the new Residence, built by the English Govt. for Lord Cromer's accommodation, a commodious and stately building on the bank of the Nile. The Cromers were exceedingly kind, and I much enjoyed my visit. I had the pleasure of making the acquaintance of General Forestier Walker, who then commanded in the place of Sir Frederick Stevenson, and I met many of my brother officers.

The day after my arrival being the Khedive's birthday I made an official visit to congratulate him, and I also called on many officials with whom I was acquainted, including Nubar and Jigrane Pashas, and Vicomte Jeko, the French Consul General, who had been one of the Danube Commissioners after my time, and who was a most interesting man, with whom I had many subjects in common. From all these people I received invitations to banquets and entertainments, but unfortunately the weather became very chilly and I again caught cold in my eyes which confined me to my room for a week, and necessitated great care during a much longer period, so that I was unable to take part in any festivities. Doctor Bloomfield was especially kind to me during my illness and often came to sit with me while I was confined to the house.

Among others whom I met at this time, whose names have since become famous, were Colonel Kitchener and Colonel Rundle. Kitchener was at that time Sirdar, and Rundle his Staff officer.

I cannot speak too gratefully of the kindness and attention of the Cromers, on whom I had inflicted a sick patient as a guest.

On Christmas Day I started for Ismailia, in order to join the P & O steamer, which was hourly expected. As it happened she did not arrive till next day, so I stayed with the de Rouvilles. He was the Chief Engineer of the Company, married to a charming woman, -- a Parisian. I had been present at their wedding some years before, and knew them

well. Nine months after my visit this excellent man was murdered by a discontented workman, who shot him one evening close to his own door.

On the 26th. December I embarked on board the "Carthage" and had a rather rough passage from Port Said to Brindisi. I reached home on the 1st. January, 1894, and on the 4th. had a very pleasant interview with Lord Rosebery, to give an account of my mission, with which he seemed perfectly satisfied.

My earliest visit was to Bath, to see Edith, whom I found better, but still requiring great care. I next went to stay with my old friend Edward Bligh, at Fartherwell. This was the first of the annual visits there from which I have derived so much pleasure.

During the summer of this year I went over to stay with the Stoney's at their pretty place near Delgany, in County Wicklow. This was my first visit to Ireland, Colonel Stoney lionized me over Dublin, where, in the Phoenix Park, I first saw the game of polo played. I paid a pleasant visit to my friends, the Isack's at Booter's Town, and attended the great Dublin Horse Show, the finest sight of the kind I have ever witnessed.

From Ireland I made my way, via Belfast and Stranraer, to Carlisle, and thence to Etal Manor, where my stay was as usual full of brightness and entertainment of all kinds.

From Etal I went to see my married daughters at Wigan and Derby. At the latter place I was pleased to meet Colonel Noel, and his brother, who had known my Father, and been a friend of my brother Edward in his early days. It is always a great pleasure to me to meet those who knew and valued them. In the autumn I again spent some time at Tickencote Hall, where I met Colonel le Messurier, a brother officer, of the Indian R.E.

It was at this time that I began to write my life, which has during the succeeding years been a labour of love in my few hours of leisure from public matters.

Early in December the life of Ferdinand de Lesseps closed, mercifully sheltered by his failing faculties and by the tender care of his devoted family from the "Panama" storm then raging. On the 14th. I crossed over to Paris to attend his funeral, a pathetic function, but most fatiguing, lasting, as it did from 11.30a.m. to 5p.m. My presence was gratefully welcomed by the Lesseps family.

Our Christmas this year was a bright one, as it was spent at Wigan, where we had a Christmas tree and other festivities for the dear children.

The year 1895 was a happier one to us, as we were able to remove from Streatham Hill which we disliked so much. We had been looking for a

house for some time, when, almost by accident, we found that Spring House, at Ewell would be vacant if we wished to take it.



Architect's drawing of the northern elevation of Spring House, Ewell, Surrey. Looking into Spring Lane and Park.



Front entrance, Spring House

That is, Mr. Fairfax Taylor, whose wife - a Miss de Butts - we had known as a girl, was anxious to move, finding the house too small, and, on hearing that I was willing to take the remainder of his lease off his hands, he at once decided to do so. The house and garden were exactly what we wanted, so I gladly closed with his offer, and at Michaelmas we took up our abode in Ewell.

In the spring I had been anxious as to the tenure of my position as Director of the Suez Canal, on behalf of H.M.'s Government as in June fell my 70th birthday, the age limit for those employed in the Civil Service. I had already been granted an extension from the usual period of retirement, at the age of 65, and, to all appearance, it seemed that I should have to give up the duties which had been so congenial to me. The Government, however, recognized that my services were of great importance on the Suez Canal Board, and that no one whom they could appoint to succeed me would have the same influence with the members of the Council! for it has been generally recognized by all the members of the Company that I rendered them important services in 1873, and again in 1876, in finding a solution of the international difficulties which had sprung up between the Company and the European Powers. They looked upon me as having saved the Company from very grave misfortunes. That feeling has been cherished ever since, and is now shared by the Directors subsequently appointed, as a tradition which has been handed down by the de Lesseps, and maintained by M. Charles de Lesseps, who is still a member of the Council. I have received assurance from Prince d'Arenberg, now President, and from other members of the Council, that they consider my presence of vital importance to them; and this feeling had been so impressed on H.M.'s Government that they desired to continue my services in spite of the age limit, if it could be so arranged. A solution of the difficulty was found in the following way.

Having reached the age of 70, I could not continue to be a paid Official of the Civil Service. Since 1876 I had received a salary from the Government, handing over to the Treasury all the fees which were paid to me, as Director, by the Company. These fees amounted to considerably more than the fixed salary, and we had once or twice requested the Government to allow us to receive the fees instead of a salary. This had been acceded to in the case of the Resident Director in Paris, but had been refused to Sir Rivers Wilson and myself. Now however, that the difficulty of my age arose, it was suggested that I should receive the fees, as Director, by which means I was placed outside the Civil Service rules, while drawing increased pay for my services, - an arrangement which suited me. It was accepted by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, for one year, at all events, as it was necessary to retain my services for that time. Since then my retention of the appointment has been temporary, but renewed yearly, up to this time, 1902. The arrangement, though made by Lord Rosebery's Government, was cordially received and acted upon by that of Lord Salisbury which succeeded it.

In 1895 we had the pleasure of welcoming to England my dear son, Alfred and his wife. He got a few months' leave in the summer, and we had a pleasant visit to Etal Manor in their company. I managed to play Lawn Tennis all this summer, but years were beginning to tell on my activity, and, feeling the effort of running in to the net rather more than my lameness would allow, I made up my mind to give up playing. I had the satisfaction of having carried it into my 71st year, and of having had many excellent games to the last.

In Ewell and the country round we were kindly received, and have made many friends. General McCrea, who had been among the older Cadets when I joined at Woolwich, was living in the village. I had seen but little of him in all the intervening years, and was pleased to renew the acquaintance. He did not, however, live for more than a year or two after we came to Ewell.

I spent the Christmas of 1896 happily at Derby, with Gina and Arthur Hamilton and their two dear girls.

In May, 1896 Sir Rivers Wilson retired, under the age clause, from the Suez Canal Directorate. He was succeeded by the Hon: Sir Charles Fremantle, K.C.B., in whom I have found ever since a most valuable colleague and charming companion.

In the summer the Company had the misfortune to lose M. Guichard, who had succeeded M. de Lesseps as President. He had been a very old ally of the latter, having been charged, in the early days of the Company, with the formation of the Domain fertilized by the Fresh Water Canal from Cairo, which the Company had been forced to surrender under the judgement of the Sultan in 1866. From this period M. Guichard was intimately connected with the administration of the Company; he was, in fact, the first Chef de Transit, and in that capacity had organized the system under which vessels at first navigated the Canal. From his uncle, who owned the principal gas works in Paris, he had inherited an enormous fortune of over a million sterling. He left the service of the Company, but was made a Director, and subsequently filled the office of President with such success that his death was considered a great misfortune by all.

I suggested that I should be sent to attend his funeral, with authority to use words expressive of our Government's appreciation of the manner in which he had carried out his duties as President and for that purpose I left England on the 18th. July, and went on next morning to Sens, where the funeral was to take place. I was a pall bearer, and pronounced one of the orations at the graves in which I emphasised the high opinion of H.M.'s Government. It was rather an ordeal to make a speech in French to an exclusively French assemblage, but it was exceedingly well received and gave great pleasure both to the Guichard family and to my colleagues.

In 1896 I took to a tricycle, in order to accompany Edith on her bicycle rides. I found it a very pleasant way of getting about the country, but unfortunately I soon had to give it up, as it was found to increase the lameness in my hip from which I had suffered for some time, and which I had hoped might derive benefit rather than injury from riding.

In October a sad occurrence took place in Paris. M. Victor de Lesseps the second son of the old man, fell from the top storey of his house, and received such injuries that he died soon after. This was a heavy blow to this united family. He was a man of refined and retiring disposition, devoted to painting and horticulture.

In the end of this year I had the sorrow of losing my life-long friend, the Earl of Darnley, who died suddenly of angina pectoris. His health had evidently been much affected by the death of his daughter, Lady Mary Bligh, who had been found drowned in the ornamental water in Cobham Park in July of the previous year. I attended my old friend's funeral at Cobham on the 21st. December. The whole family were there and I met many of its members whom I had not seen for years.

Before the close of the year we had the pleasure of welcoming our old friend, Miss Ranken home from Japan, after her 5 years absence, and she spent Christmas with us at Ewell.

In 1897 I tried a course of treatment at Bath for my lameness, which I found very beneficial and have since repeated at intervals.

On the 7th. April Mr Henry Nourse, a cousin of my wife's father, died in London. He had asked me to be one of his executors and when this duty came upon me I found it likely to be a very onerous one. He had left landed property of great extent in Natal and the Orange Free State, (some 120,000 acres) which his executors had to realize, as well as a considerable personal estate in England. His will distributed his property in various proportions, among several of his relations and others. A member of my family was one of the legatees, and this fact naturally added to the interest which I took in my duties as executor. The realization of such an estate meant some years' work, in order to obtain the most advantageous return from the sale of these large and scattered properties.

In June we were able to take a pleasant share in the Jubilee festivities. I had two seats in the United Service Club, which was fitted up with much care. In these I placed my daughter Con, and her cousin, Margaret Stokes, Edith was at Sir Charles Hartley's, 26 Pall Mall, and I took my chance in the portico of the U.S. Club and in this way we all had an excellent view of the Queen and the splendid procession by which she was accompanied.

Alfred was at this time Adjutant to the Horse Artillery at Woolwich, and he and his wife, with the rest of the Laing family, were in excellent seats in Pall Mall, quite close to the Club. Two days before the procession a party of us went up from Ewell to the Victoria Park, where there was a grand display of five regiments of Cavalry and fourteen batteries of Artillery, and the mounted Colonial troops, who were to form part of the procession in the following week. This display was for the purpose of giving the people of the East End an opportunity of seeing the troops. Alfred, as Adjutant, had a principal part to play on this occasion, and General Maurice, Commanding at Woolwich, kindly gave me facilities for witnessing this imposing sight.

The great procession took place on Tuesday the 26th. June, the anniversary of Her Majesty's accession to the throne having fallen on a Sunday. It was a splendid success from first to last; the illuminations at night were magnificent. We walked through the principal streets, and had an excellent view of them, and next evening we joined a party on the top of a bus and saw the illuminations in the City.

On the 26th. my daughter Edith and I went to Southampton and embarked on the "Gourkha" the ship assigned by the Admiralty to Government officials desirous of seeing the Naval Review. We had to leave London very early, and as we steamed down the Solent there were apprehensions as to the weather, for a dense fog obscured everything. As we approached the fleet, however, the sun burst forth brilliantly, and the noble array of ships stood out in all their magnificence.

By 11.30am. we found ourselves approaching a fleet of 165 vessels drawn up in five lines, each five miles long. We steamed slowly up and down between the lines, inspecting each ship as we passed. The first were vessels built some years before, among them those of the old type, with three masts and yards, - beautiful ships to look at but of no use against modern guns, they are valuable, however, for purposes of training. One ship among them interested us, the "Calliope", which a few years ago steamed out of the Harbour of Samoa in the face of a terrible hurricane in which many European and American ships were lost. - This was held to be a fine feat of seamanship on the part of Captain Kane and his officers and crew.

After passing ships of varying strength, among them the Torpedo Destroyers, - long, low, ugly looking vessels, - we came upon a large number of fine Torpedo boats, with high forecastles, but long and low aft. At the head of the lines were our powerful Armour-clads and, as we rounded the extremity of the first two lines, we saw these splendid ships, "The Magnificent", "Mars", "Majestic", "Repulse", and several others.

The sight of these, the most powerful ships in the world, was a source of pride and joy to us all.

The rapidity with which our splendidly equipped dockyards can turn out these great vessels is a most satisfactory reflection. One year is sufficient to complete the hull, and a second sees the ship furnished with engines and guns, and made ready for sea. It is this rapidity of construction which enables England to keep so well ahead of all other nations.

Chief among the Cruisers were the "Powerful" and "Terrible" which steam 21 knots an hour, and have to be able to destroy any privateers attempting to intercept our Mercantile steamers. There were many other Cruisers, 1st. 2nd. and third class but none equal to those two. Since that time however, the number has been increased. I saw in the distance the battle ship "Collingwood", which was the crack ship of the Fleet in the Jubilee Review of 1887, but she is now out of date.

I had now seen three Naval Reviews, that of 1867, when the then new iron-clads, "Warrior", "Black Prince", "Minotaur", and others were arranged parallel to the wooden ships of the line, "Royal Admiral", "Duke of Wellington" etc: the fleet of 1887, when there was a great variety of types; and this of 1897, which, on the contrary, was remarkable for the number of vessels of the types which had been recognized as the best for modern conditions of warfare, - Battleships, Cruisers, Gun-boats, Torpedo boats, and Torpedo Destroyers. Of each of these classes there were several of the most approved form, and thus the Fleet presented the appearance of strength and homogeneity which showed it so superior to any other. One matter of satisfaction was the reflection that none of our stations abroad had been weakened for this grand display, but that even in our home reserves there were still many ships that might have been added to the Fleet at Spithead.

After our inspection we came to anchor in line with the foreign men-of-war, to await the arrival of the Prince of Wales in the "Victoria and Albert". These Foreign ships could not compare with ours, except, perhaps, the Japanese Cruiser, a very fine vessel, built in England.

At length, under a glorious sun, the "Victoria and Albert" was seen making her way down the line in which were the finest vessels, and the guns of that division fired a salute, the smoke of which for a time hid the procession from us. As the smoke cleared we could see the royal yacht steam slowly up, followed by half a dozen other vessels with distinguished persons on board. The crews cheered the Prince as he passed. Every ship of the fleet and all the host of merchant vessels with visitors, were dressed from stem to stern, so that there was a bright display of colour everywhere. The Prince's inspection up and down the line lasted for nearly three hours, after which the yacht anchored opposite the Admiral's flag ship, the "Renown". The Prince was in full dress as Admiral of the Fleet, and was surrounded by a brilliant staff. He was accompanied by the Princess and many other ladies. Late the same evening we returned to Ewell, delighted and impressed by all we had seen.

On the 25th I had the honour of attending a garden party given by Her Majesty at Buckingham Palace. It was a gloriously fine day and all the elite of London was there. I regretted not having Edith with me, but, as she had not been to Court for several years she did not receive an invitation. Buckingham Palace Garden is of great extent, in an area of over 40 acres are many fine trees and extensive lawns. On the largest of these the guests were assembled to the number, according to the newspaper reports, of 5000, all the beauty and fashion of London, and a lovely sight it was. The Queen came on the ground in a low Victoria, drawn by two greys, with postillions, and preceded by an outrider. She passed round and round among her guests, stopping now and then to speak to friends. We had tea in a large pavilion, the royal guests being received by the Queen. This was the last of a marvellously well directed series of fetes. Not a single hitch had occurred, and there were no serious accidents. The Police and Military arrangements in London were admirable, and at Spithead the Naval authorities had every movement of the shipping under control.

A propos of our Naval preparedness I may mention that the French Minister, being with Mr. Goschen, the first Lord of the Admiralty, on board the ship carrying the Ministers observed to him, "I suppose these ships are only partially manned, just turned out for show"? Mr. Goschen answered, "The first division of this fleet will put to sea in a day or two, and another large division follows it immediately, to manoeuvre against it." To this there was no reply.

In October of this year Edith and I were present at the annual dinner at the Mansion House, when the gift of fruit sent to the Lord Mayor by the Fruiterer's Company is displayed. We met many friends, and had a very interesting musical entertainment.

Alfred was promoted to be Major on Christmas Day of this year, he thus lost his appointment of Adjutant of Horse Artillery at Woolwich, so we had him and his wife as our guests for five months, whilst he awaited an appointment to a battery. In March Edith and Alfred's wife attended the Queen's Drawing-room, and this was made the occasion for a very pleasant family gathering in the afternoon, when we were kindly entertained by Lady Laing, and had an opportunity of admiring several pretty Court dresses.

As Mr. Gladstone's death occurred about the time of the Queen's Birthday, the official reception at the Foreign Office did not take place, and instead Lord Salisbury gave a garden party at Hatfield, to which Edith and I went. This was my first visit to that historic place. The party was a very brilliant affair, but our great interest was in going over the house. I naturally found myself comparing it with the old Elizabethan mansion which is so familiar to me, - Cobham Hall. To my mind the latter is the finer building. The reception rooms are grander and the dwelling rooms more comfortable. The Hatfield gardens are certainly

superior, but Hatfield has no park like that which surrounds Cobham Hall.

The summer had a great pleasure in store for us. In July my eldest son, Charles and his daughter, Etta came from Australia to visit us, and they were followed in September, by Frank and his wife and their daughter Edith. Charles and Etta left in November, but the others remained with us till the following August.

My life this year was filled with the various duties of my Companies, together with those of Mr. Nourse's executors, and also by a good deal of work for the Lady Strangford Hospital. The end of the year found us engaged in various amusements to enliven the visit of our dear Australians.

Our neighbourhood to Epsom made me acquainted with Mr. and Mrs. Bucknill, he was brother to Colonel Bucknill, R.E. for whom I have a great regard. Mr. Bucknill, at that time represented the Epsom Division in Parliament, and when, in the autumn of this year, Mrs. Bucknill became President of the "Soldiers and Sailors Families Association" for the Epsom Division she asked me to be the Hon. Treasurer, representing it as a post which would entail but little work or responsibility. Very soon after this however, Mr. Bucknill was made a Judge and his work as Treasurer devolved on me, and, after a few months, the outbreak of the War in South Africa made the post one of incessant labour.

In May 1898 I consented to become a Director of the "Khedivial Mail Steam-ship and Dock Company". This duty, also, was represented to me as one which would give very little trouble; it has turned out, however to involve a good deal more work than I had bargained for.

The beginning of 1899 was passed very much as the end of 1898. During the course of Frank's visit we had several pleasant expeditions. We took him and his wife and little daughter to Cobham Hall on the 17th. June, by way of celebrating my 74th. birthday, among scenes so dear to me, and of which I am glad to think that my children too will have pleasant memories. We paid a visit to Windsor Castle, where we saw both the private and state apartments, in which my Australians were much interested. I was able also to get them some excellent places at a Review held by the Queen at Aldershot on the 26th. June, where we had the advantage of being close to Her Majesty, and saw everything to perfection. Another trip was to Oxford, where we visited all the principal Colleges. We met there with great kindness and attention from Mr. Carter, Dean of Magdalen and others. We also went over Hampton Court and the lovely gardens there. Another day was spent at Westminster, when Frank took me to the Deanery. I was pleased to make the acquaintance of Dean Bradley, who had known my dear brother, Edward, in former days. Here too we met Dean Paget of Christchurch, now Bishop of Oxford.

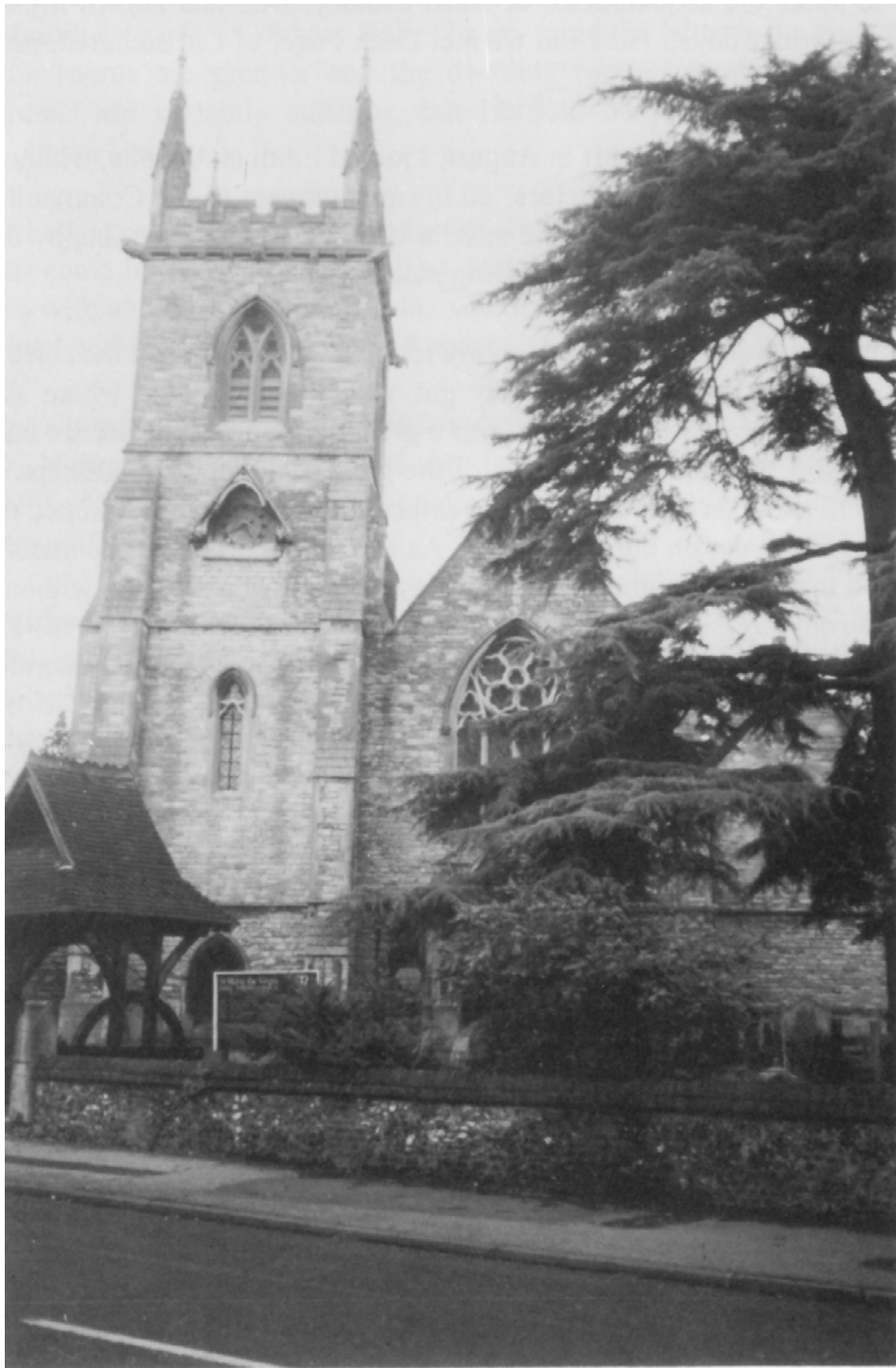
After seeing the Australians off in August, I joined Edith at Athlone, whither Alfred and his wife and gone some time before, on his appointment to the Command of a battery there. This was my first visit to the interior of Ireland, and a very happy one. We met pleasant people and saw many interesting places.

I, in due course, went to Paris, and, on my return in October, I had the sorrow of finding that my daughter Edith, had suddenly got very ill in London, where she had been staying for a day or two. This illness was a great disappointment, for we had planned to go together to Egypt for the unveiling of the great statue of M.de Lesseps at Port Said, which was to take place on the 17th. November, after which we had hoped to have had a pleasant time in Italy, on our way home. As my dear child was quite unable to travel, I determined to return straight home from Egypt after the ceremony, without attempting to see or do anything else. I left her at home, on the 8th. November, in the kind hands of our dear friend, Miss Ranken, and, passing through Paris, where I attended the usual meeting at the Canal office. I went on to Marseilles, and embarked on board the "Indus", belonging to the "Maritime de France". I had travelled with Sir Charles and Lady Fremantle and found many friends on board. Among them were Sir John WolfeBarry, Sir John Scott, Sir Henry Bergne and my dear old friend Hartley.

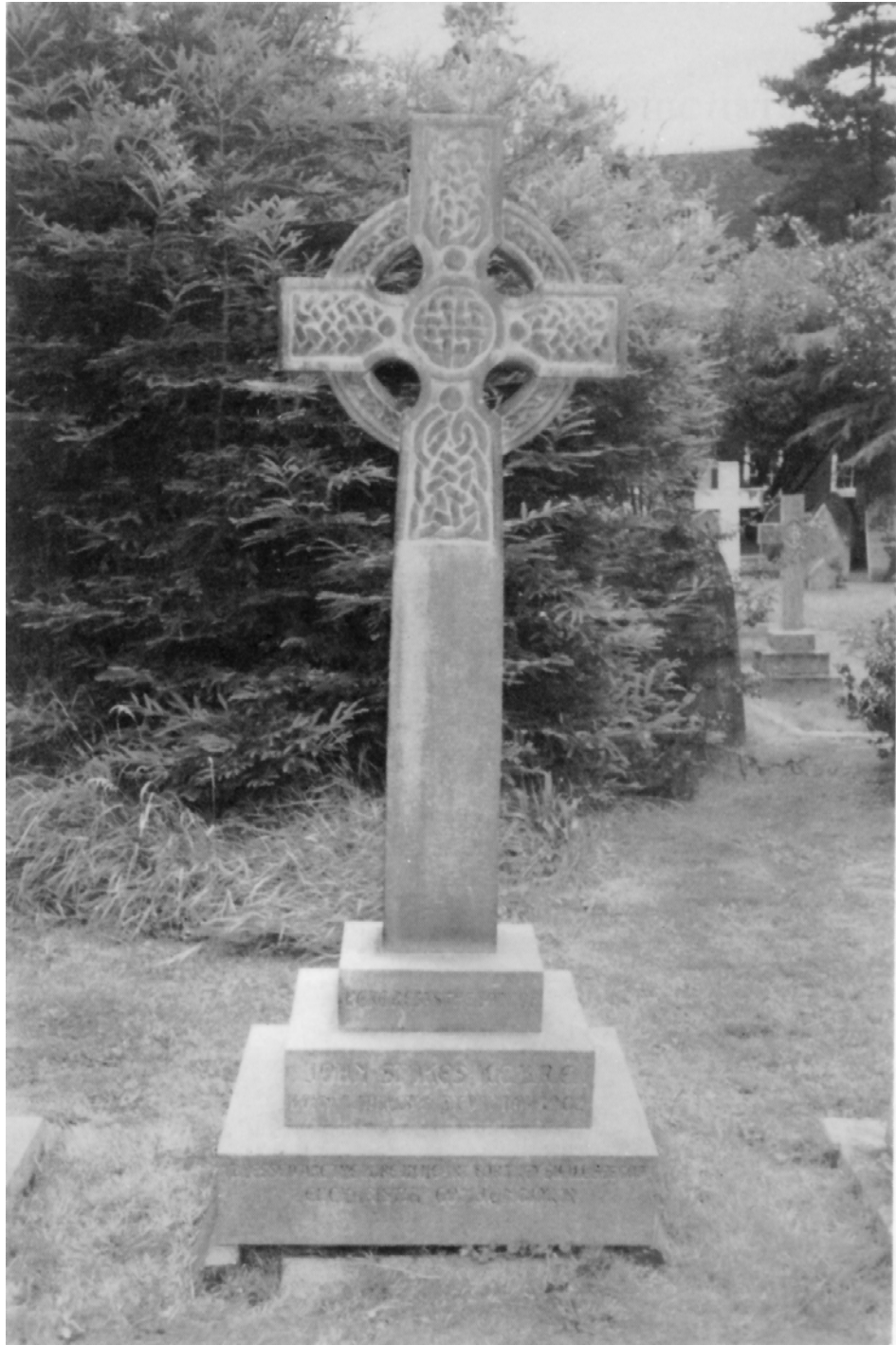
We had a very fine passage all the way from Marseilles to Brindisi, except for a few hours crossing the Adriatic, and arrived at Port Said early on the 16th.

This visit to Port Said had a double interest for me, because, in addition to the festivities connected with the Canal, it enabled me to examine unto the condition of the Lady Strangford Hospital.

END OF AUTOBIOGRAPHY



Church of St. Mary the Virgin, Ewell, Surrey



Bligh, Hon. the Rev. E.V. Bligh, Sir John Adagh, Colonel Thos.
 with Capt. Mtd. Perry
 Mr. Gray (representing the
 Division of the S.

*Grave of Sir John Stokes
 in the Parish Church Graveyard*

Sir John Stokes K.C.B. R.E. deceased 17/11/1902

Extract from the London DAILY GRAPHIC (18/11/1902)

Lieut-General Sir John Stokes, whose death was reported yesterday, was formerly British Vice-Consul in the Delta of the Danube, and Vice-President of the Suez Canal Company. Sir John, who was seventy-seven years of age, had seen considerable active military service and had greatly distinguished himself, being repeatedly mentioned in despatches and general orders.

In 1874 he was created a K.C.B. and much of his work subsequently was connected with Egypt and the Suez Canal.

THE FUNERAL

The funeral took place at Ewell on Thursday afternoon. At the service in the Parish Church were a very large number of the friends of the deceased who attended to show a last tribute of respect. Lord Lansdowne, Minister of Foreign Affairs, was represented by his Private Secretary, the Board of Trade by Mr. Henry Noel Malan (Registrar of Shipping), and the Suez Canal Company by M. Chevassis, and the Army and Navy Investment Trust Co. by Mr. James Lamb.

The service in the Church, in which Sir John formed one of the congregation on Sunday morning last, and in which he took a great interest, was choral. The committal portion of the service was read by the Rev. W.H.H. Jervois, of St Mary Magdalene, Munster Square.

MOURNERS

The principal mourners were:- Miss Stokes (daughter), Major (son) and Mrs Stokes, Miss M. Stokes (Niece), Mrs Hamilton (daughter), Mr and Mrs Buchanan (daughter), Mr Bigg Wither (son-in-law).

Among those at the grave-side were:- Mr J. Maynard, Mr and Mrs Fleming Maynard, Mr. Maynard Horne, Mr Walsham How, Capt. E. Blunt, Sir Charles Hartley, Sir Charles Fremantle, Miss Ranken, Canon Hamilton, General Edmeades, Mr. James Edmeades, General Micklem, General Hutchison, Comte Charles de Lesseps, Hon. Arthur Bligh, Hon. the Rev. E.V. Bligh, Sir John Adagh, Colonel Durnford, Lady Elizabeth Cust, Mrs Percy Cust, Mr B. Laing, Mr Loewe (representing the Roburite Company), Mr Gray (representing the Khedivial Company), the Committee of the Epsom Division of the Soldiers' and Sailors' Families' Association.

SIR JOHN STOKES K.C.B. R.E.

MILITARY TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

This autobiography was written under the influence of an Army career, and as some **readers** may not be familiar with the every day Military terms and abbreviations used, **the** following may be of assistance.

C.B.	Companion of the Order of the Bath
K.C.B.	Knight Commander of the Order of the Bath
A.G.	Adjutant General
D.A.G.	Deputy Adjutant General
Q.M.G.	Quarter-Master General
A.Q.M.G.	Assistant Quarter-Master General
D.A.Q.M.G.	Deputy Assistant Quarter-Master General
R.A.	Royal Artillery
R.E.	Royal Engineers
Sappers	Royal Engineer Troops
D.G.	Dragoon Guards
C.M.R.	Cape Mounted Rifles (South African Cape Corps Mounted troops)
Cpl.	Corporal
Sjt.	Serjeant
R.S.M.	Regimental Serjeant Major
Lieut.	Lieutenant
Capt.	Captain
Q.M.	Quarter-Master
Maj.	Major
Lt. Col.	Lieutenant Colonel
Brig.	Brigadier
Maj. Gen.	Major General
Lt. Gen.	Lieutenant General

Lieutenant General Sir John Stokes - 1881 Census

Dwelling: 11 Gledhow Gardens

Census Place: Kensington, London, Middlesex, England

Source: FHL Film 1341011 PRO Ref RG11 Piece 0048 Folio 97 Page 50

Marr Age Sex Birthplace

John STOKES M 55 M Cobham, Kent, England

Rel: Head

Occ: Knight Comr Of The Bath & Col R E

Henrietta Gdev. V. STOKES M 51 F Cape Colony Grahamstown

Rel: Wife

Edith STOKES U 24 F Turkey (BS), Romania

Rel: Daur

Constance STOKES U 18 F Turkey (BS), Romania

Rel: Daur

Isabella RANKEN U 45 F Scotland

Rel: Visitor

Richard SHERLOCK M 36 M Salisbury, Wiltshire, England

Rel: Serv

Occ: Man Servant Soldier R Marines

Ann THOMAS U 42 F Prendergast, Pembroke, Wales

Rel: Serv

Occ: Nurse

Mary A. WALKER U 24 F Haverfordwest, Pembroke, Wales

Rel: Serv

Occ: Nurse

Emily JOHNSON M 24 F Tangiers, Pembroke, Wales

Rel: Serv

Occ: Cook

Emily M. WALKER U 20 F St Tho Haverfordwest, Pembroke, Wales

Rel: Serv

Occ: Housemaid

Maria LEWIS U 14 F Rudbaxton, Pembroke, Wales

Rel: Serv

Occ: Housemaid